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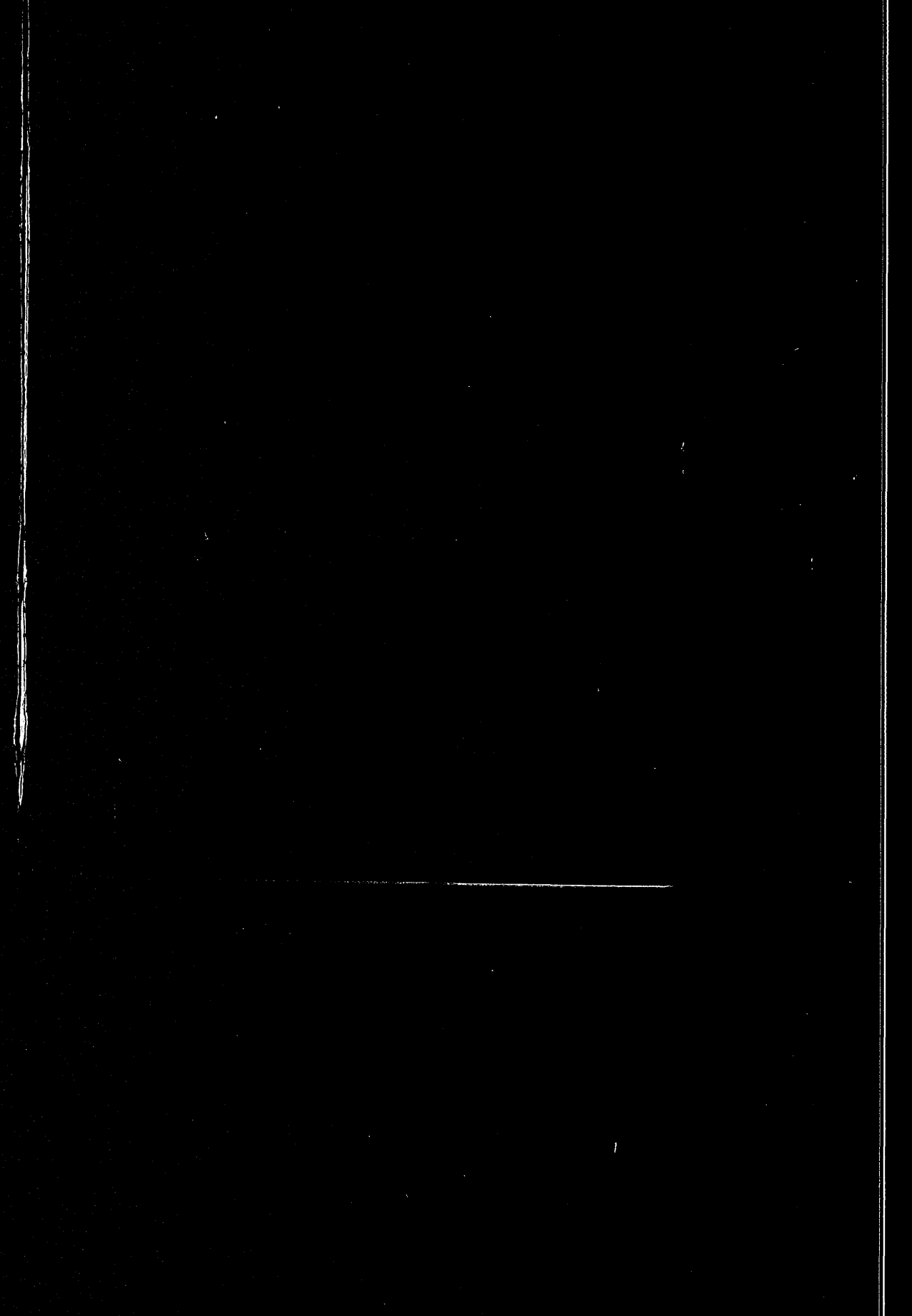
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D O G M A

AND

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

BY

A. I. FITZROY
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DEDICATION

TO

THE REV. ALFRED MOMERIE, D.Sc., LL.D.

MY DEAR DR. MOMERIE,

You have very kindly allowed me to dedicate my book to you. I need not say what pleasure it gives me to do so, more especially as I reckon you among the greatest teachers whom the Church of England has ever possessed.

It is curious that though we are in perfect agreement as to our wishes for the English Church, we yet differ somewhat in our forecasts of its future, and in our estimates of its strength. I am, in a word, more hopeful about our Church than you seem to be. But of this I am convinced, if the Church of England passes safely through this present crisis—as I hope and believe it will—no one will be more pleased than you who have boldly demonstrated its danger.

Believe me,

With sincere respect, gratitude and sympathy,

Always very truly yours,

A. I. FITZROY.

OCTOBER 31, 1891.

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PREFACE.

CHRISTIANITY is commonly supposed to be a dogmatic religion. Dogmatism in theology may be defined as the authoritative statement of opinions claiming to be supernaturally revealed, and not otherwise obtainable, on the acceptance of which salvation is said to depend.

There are two large classes of dogmatists in Christendom, each including several varieties, which, nevertheless, are agreed upon the dogmatic principle. These are the biblical and the traditional schools. The former asserts that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be received as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."¹ The latter holds that there are "Truths contained in the Word of God, written or unwritten, . . . and proposed by the Church for the belief of the faithful."² "That truth and falsehood are set before us for the trial of our hearts; that our choice is an awful giving forth of lots on which salvation or rejection is inscribed; that before all things it is necessary to hold the Catholic faith," and that "he that would be saved must thus think, and not otherwise."³ That is to say, this school believes in the inspira-

¹ VI. Article of Religion.

² Catholic Dictionary of Theology.

³ Newman's Essay on Dev. of Doct., p. 357.

tion of the majorities in Church Councils, by whom the hints and indistinct foreshadowings of doctrine in Holy Writ are developed into creeds and formulæ.

Both schools of dogmatists believe that on the acceptance of these metaphysical subtleties depends our everlasting welfare. Most of them regard moral conduct as the result of creed, and of secondary importance thereto. The extreme members—Calvinists, Antinomians, Mystics—attach no importance whatever to practice, even considering good works a stumbling-block and an occasion of falling. By far the greater part, however, are more moderate; and though they will not admit that a man's deeds can be good if his creed be not sound, they yet refuse to credit the sincerity of his faith if it be not shown in right living.

The change from primitive Christianity to a metaphysical system began early. Mankind speedily erected a standard of belief, first by the side of, then above and finally in some cases instead of, that of conduct. Before long the exhortations of the Master to love peace and forbearance were drowned in a hubbub of angry quarrels about His nature, His past and future existence, or, still worse, about the proper time, mode and place for celebrating His death, or for making the simple pledge of membership He required of His followers.

But during these nineteen centuries of doctrinal extension, there have always been certain opponents of dogmatism. Even in the darkest ages of the Church, when paltry quarrels and bitter hatreds threatened her very life, there were at least a few seers of righteousness—hated, despised, and often rejected, doubtless—who by their protests against what they regarded as a lamentable fall from grace in the Church of Christ, showed that they belonged to that goodly fellowship of prophets whose

message to their generation has always been that conduct is more important than creed and ritual, and loving-kindness more honouring to God than persecution and anathema.

These anti-dogmatists or liberals deny that there are any truths necessary to salvation. They maintain that the Founder of their religion proposed no doctrinal tests for admission into His kingdom, insisted on no ceremonial observances, and taught no articles of belief, but simply required of His followers to live as He lived, and if need be to die as He died, in a spirit of brotherly love and self-devotion; that His entire teaching—so much, that is, as we can know of it from the witness of His immediate followers—was of the beauty of holiness and the obligations to righteousness, without any metaphysical or theoretical propositions whatever; in short, that Christ preached little theology and much religion. They acknowledge no development of doctrine in Christianity, for they say there are, properly speaking, no doctrines to develop; they simply apply and reapply, under all the changing circumstances of the individual and of the race, the fundamental moral principle of Christ, seeking ever to widen, deepen, and strengthen the power of the Golden Rule.

Corresponding to the extreme dogmatists who attach an ultra-importance to belief, there are some anti-dogmatists who seem to attach an almost equal importance to disbelief. The latter denounce metaphysics for being useless and harmful, as the former repudiate good works for being superfluous and misleading. This school has a few followers in the Church of England, but more among Agnostics, Positivists, &c. With neither of these extreme parties, however, have we here anything to do.

Metaphysical speculations are allowed, even encouraged, by the greater part of the anti-dogmatic school, but not as being essential to the Christian religion. "The best creed in the world," says one of the leading members of this party, "will never save a single soul."¹ But it is natural to man to reason and to speculate. It is instinctive with him to question "What God and man is." To seek and to love truth, according to his ability, is, indeed, required of every Christian, inasmuch as it is his duty to aim at perfection in mind as in spirit. Still to arrogate to one's self the complete possession of truth, is not the same thing as to seek it; nor is to hate and despise those who differ from us about it, the same thing as to love it. Some belief may indeed be helpful to good conduct. Confidence in the wise government of the world; hope that good will at last triumph over evil, and that there is indeed "a stream of tendency which makes for righteousness;" faith in a Supreme Being, good, powerful and loving; trust that all our strivings, our yearnings, our aspirations are but the earnest of a glorious achievement hereafter: all this may be helpful to some of us; but that it is not indispensable is shown by the lives of those who, with a noble irrationality, love righteousness and pursue holiness, even though, as it seems to them, in a world all out of joint, and for the brief span of a single life. If only the righteousness has been loved and the holiness pursued, such men may be as spiritually developed, as Christ-like, as much "saved," as those who, happily for themselves, can believe that they live under the rule of a God who doeth all things well, and that an eternity of progress awaits both the individual and the race.

It is, then, the aim of the anti-dogmatists, first, to

¹ Church and Creed, by Rev. A. W. Momerie, LL.D., D.Sc., p. 79.

restore conduct to its rightful place in religion; and, second, to substitute a sound and reasonable philosophy for mere theological assertion. If the Christianity of the future have any creed at all, it will be one that is very simple, very flexible and very rational.

It is not my purpose to trace this real Apostolic succession through the whole history of Christianity back to Christ. Nor, after the works of Réville, Renan, Stanley, Edwin Hatch, and others, does it seem necessary for any one else to show the gradual process whereby poetical, metaphorical and legendary speculations have been petrified into dogmas, and simple Eastern habits and customs expanded into elaborate ceremonials and unnatural practices.

My aim is merely to show that dogmatic teaching, however general it may be among individual clergy, is contrary to the real character of the Church of England; that the Church of England has since she broke with Rome ever recognised righteousness rather than doctrine or ceremony to be the essence of Christianity; that its members by right of membership should enjoy full freedom of thought and speech on doctrinal subjects; that the spirit of rationalism, tolerance and charity should be naturally active within it, so that it is entitled to be called a Broad Church, and may—after a few minor reforms and a clearer understanding of its own character—justly claim to be representative of Christ's Christianity.

The breadth of a Church is shown in three ways: first, by the nature of its constitution; second, by the number of its liberal divines; third, by its comprehension of all parties.

As to the first mark of a Broad Church, I hope to prove that it is not merely by occasional quibbles or by accidental omissions in its charters, that liberal views

have effected an entrance into the Church of England. But that, on the contrary, by almost every act of the legislature on Church matters, freedom of thought has been confirmed and extended. That the evident, and often the avowed, object of the ecclesiastical reformers, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, has been to increase its comprehensiveness, to ensure its freedom from theological bondage, and to maintain the superiority of conduct over creed. From the compilation of the Liturgy under Elizabeth to the passing of the Clerical Subscription Amendment Act under Victoria, the ideal of comprehension, of liberty, of non-dogmatism has been pretty steadily pursued. As to the second mark, I hope to trace in the Church of England a steadily increasing school of true Protestants, always maintaining the rights and duties of English Churchmen to free thought and free speech; to show how dogma has decayed directly, in that the heresy of one age is received as orthodox, or as at least tolerable in the next; and indirectly, in that doctrines are ever less dwelt upon in the sermons of our divines, and moral lessons more often enforced. I venture to believe that there cannot be found as large a body or as unbroken a continuity of able High Church or Low Church teachers as can be produced of liberal or undogmatic Churchmen. With regard to the third characteristic, I hope to show that the Church of England, as the national Establishment, demands agreement only upon axiomatic moral truths, and not upon subjects of argument and dispute. In accordance with this principle the Church of England, besides starting with scanty doctrinal tests, has grown more and more lax about even these. It has shown its indifference to doctrinal matters by permitting within its borders both the extreme parties—the Ritualistic and the Evangelical—only checking

their inclination to persecute each other, or to arrogate to themselves alone the title of the National Church.

In confirmation of this estimate of the character of the English Church let me quote three entirely independent opinions:—

Dr. Döllinger taunts the English Church with a lack of authoritative utterance on doctrinal matters. "The Established Church," he says, "has not so much as the semblance of the unity of doctrine or character. This," he continues, "has the effect that, even to the religious-minded Englishman, doctrine appears as something relatively unimportant and subordinate, which one need not be too exact about."¹

Bishop Ryle says:—"A strong dislike to all 'dogma' in religion is a most conspicuous and growing sign of the times."²

Mr. Wilfrid Ward, in his study of "the Oxford Movement," points out that the High Church party is not in accordance with the tone of the Establishment, but is merely suffered within its pale because of its total indifference to dogma. "Never could one-tenth of the views of the present High Church party have been tolerated on the ground that the English Church teaches them, and that dogma is, in its view, a sacred and important thing. A ruling power, whose spirit is that of indifferentism, declares all dogma to be unimportant, and High Churchmen may hold what they like, not in virtue of any special approval on the part of the Established Church, but because that Church does not either enforce or condemn *any* doctrinal system."³

Two factors are supposed to have largely contributed

¹ The Church and the Churches, pp. 168-9.

² Principles for Churchmen, p. 96.

³ W. G. Ward and the Oxford Movement, pp. 379-80.

to the development of free-thought in England during the present century. These are the French Revolution and the introduction of German criticism. Neither of these has, however, been productive of any radical alteration in the English character. The love of freedom and the appreciation of practical Christianity have been distinctive traits in English religious thought from the first. With these tendencies the influences of the French Revolution and of German erudition have but amalgamated. We shall find in the writings of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century divines unmistakable evidence of that desire to return to primitive Christianity so openly advocated by many in the nineteenth century. With these characteristics of the English nation the influence of the French Revolution has combined far more effectively and immediately than has that of German criticism. The shock of the political events of the later years of 1700 and the early years of 1800 seem to have aroused the rather torpid tendencies of the English into great activity. Since then our religion has been ever increasingly practical. Doctrines have been but little combated or rationalised; they have rather been neglected for the more pressing claims of mankind. Men are learning to love, instead of to dispute with, one another. German philosophy, since about the middle of the nineteenth century, has had some little effect upon our theology, but it has hardly taken any immediate or popular hold, and is scarcely suited to the general tone of the English people. The wider character of the religion of England at the end of the nineteenth century is due to the original bias of the nation towards freedom, kindness and common sense, prompted, doubtless, somewhat by the example of France, and to a far less degree by the teaching of Germany.

In following the movement of reform in the English Church it must not be supposed that the friends of progress venture to claim the day as already theirs. The battle of freedom is not yet won, but the enemy's ranks are in many places broken through. The citadel is not yet taken, but several outposts have surrendered. The recent judgment pronounced by the Archbishop of Canterbury upon the case of the Bishop of Lincoln, the failure of a veteran persecutor to obtain the censure of Convocation on "*Lux Mundi*," illustrate the growth of liberty in the English Church during the last fifty or even thirty years. The tone of "*Lux Mundi*," and of the writings of many modern High Churchmen, notably of the late Canon Aubrey Moore, show the influence of liberalism even in the dogmatic party. The doctrines for which the dogmatists of the last generation fought so stubbornly against the Essayists, Maurice, Colenso and Stanley, are now either adopted, abandoned, or so transformed as to be practically repudiated. The Moderate Churchmen of these last years of the nineteenth century would have been called Erastians, Unitarians, Latitudinarians, even Atheists at its beginning. For one liberal Churchman in the early years of 1800 we now have fifty; for one Broad Churchman we now have ten. The battle is not yet won, but the enemy's ranks are wavering from end to end. The citadel is not yet taken, but by their desperate valour and fierce denunciation its defenders show that their hearts grow faint within them. One after another crosses over from the dogmatic to the anti-dogmatic party; one after another of the onlookers joins the side of peace, of love, of toleration. May we not hope that ere long there will be no parties to divide the Church of God in England, but that all will be united in one common work of love, with the one common aim

of following Christ? Then will be fulfilled in our midst that ancient prophecy of the seer at Patmos, "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." Then indeed may our Church be defined as "THE NATION LOVING RIGHTEOUSNESS."

I must add some words of more particular explanation of the scope and plan of this work.

In the first place, it may be objected that a book attacking ecclesiasticism ought not to deal exclusively with the writings of the clergy, but that the equality of the clerical and lay parts of the Church should be recognised. It must nevertheless be remembered that, however real this equality may be in theory, it is not popularly admitted; nor, indeed, can it be until a great change, well-nigh a revolution, has been effected in our way of thinking. Although legally all Englishmen, unless they have joined another communion, are by right of birth members of the Establishment, there are many, especially among the scientific and literary, who take no pains to make good their title. Public opinion and their own wish put them outside the pale of the ecclesia. They speak and write, and are heard and read, as Englishmen, patriots, humanitarians, even as Christians, but not necessarily as Churchmen. Professor Huxley might not mind having done the Church of England a good turn when he criticised Genesis or the Gospels, but he certainly never meant to do so. The author of "Ecce Homo" may be glad to have lightened the burden of doubt for many who belong to its communion, but he gives no indication of caring to defend the English, or any other division of Christendom. Even those lay theologians who have claimed or even boasted their Church membership, have either, like T. H. Green, addressed them-

selves rather to the defence of Christianity in general than of their own Church in particular, or else, like Matthew Arnold, have defended the Establishment against the Dissenters, without seeking to influence the character of the Church itself. When a new theological book startles the reading world, if it is by a layman, we ask, "Is this consistent with Christianity?" but if it is by a clergyman we say, "Is this consistent with the Church of England?" In short, we usually regard the clergyman writing on theology as speaking for his communion, and the layman as simply expressing the opinion of an individual.

In the case of laymen, however, who acknowledge themselves members of the English Church, the mutual influence between pulpit and pew is so active that it is quite possible to gauge their religious condition by examining only their theological representatives—the clergy. Until it is generally admitted that opinions have nothing to do with salvation, the clergy must continue to be looked upon as somewhat different from the laity. As long as religion is confused with theology, and men are supposed to be saved by their own learning or the learning of another, the clergy must be the leaders of the people in religious matters. Men will still be obliged to specialise about their salvation, just as they do about their worldly affairs. As they give over the management of their estates to lawyers and of their bodies to doctors, so must they give over the care of their souls to parsons. As they have not always the time, nor the talent, nor the inclination, to study for themselves the rise and fall of stocks, the ins and outs of land tenure, or the mechanism of the human frame; so they have seldom the time, talent, or inclination to examine for themselves subtle points in theology or delicate problems in meta-

physics. They must leave these matters to experts, trusting chiefly to the self-respect and self-interest of the lawyer, doctor, and parson to keep them in health and wealth here and hereafter. But, at the same time, Englishmen are jealous of entirely resigning their estates, their bodies, or their souls into another's hands. They generally choose a safe man whether for lawyer, doctor, or parson, and keep a certain amount of watch over him from the midst of their particular business. A tacit agreement is entered into between clergy and people that the former shall save the souls of the latter—for a consideration—on a respectable orthodox system. There must be no priestly arrogance; no departure from custom. The average preacher, feeling the greatness of the confidence placed in him, is fearful of betraying his trust, and accordingly year after year lays before his congregation that plan of salvation which he is *expected* to produce. "That which was good enough for our fathers is good enough for us," say the majority of the occupants of the pews. "That which saved your fathers will also save you," obediently reply the majority of the occupants of the pulpits. Fear of being unsettled, fear of unsettling, are natural and right in those who hold that eternal life depends on accepting precise and definite formulæ. If the people think that their forefathers—whose salvation it is impious to question—were saved by regular attendance at church, and not by forgiving unto seventy times seven their erring sons and straying daughters: by loudly reciting the Creed, and not by being just and kind to tenants and servants, to kinsmen and neighbours: they may well be fearful of departing from the ancient faith, and their pastors also do well to preserve them from all peril of false doctrine. In pro-

portion only as dogma dies in the pew will freedom live in the pulpit.

But there are forces in the moral and intellectual worlds which cannot be kept out of the clerical. Changes gradually steal over the congregations, and in course of time affect the utterances of the clergy. With whatever pains a man may try to change his thoughts, like his coat, on Sunday morning, it is impossible to exclude from church every question and interest of the day. No matter how zealously the pastor may shield his flock from the approach of doubt, the desire for truth will show itself at last, even in the sacred building. Stray facts picked up in the newspapers and magazines about geology and astronomy clash with the lessons from Genesis and Joshua; widening experience of men and manners conflict with the readings from Chronicles and Kings. "Philosophy and criticism have become a great power in the world," says Matthew Arnold, "and inevitably tend to alter and develop Church doctrine. . . . Yet the seat of the developing force is not in the Church, but elsewhere; its influences filter strugglingly into the Church, and the Church slowly absorbs and incorporates them."¹ Criticism and philosophy cannot be restricted to any one profession, least of all to that profession which has for the most part openly rejected the one and stopped half-way in the other. If, therefore, we would really estimate the theological progress of the Church, we must do so through her ordained, and not through her lay members. We can best judge of the results of criticism and philosophy on doctrine in the writings of those who have made it their especial province. The clergy, as a general rule, touch in their sermons upon those doctrines which correspond to the subjects uppermost in the minds

¹ St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 104.

of their people. Sometimes the more exceptional and independent among them express opinions in advance of the mass of their congregations. But even in these cases, it is probable that in their most daring utterances they are responding to the half-uttered questionings of a few among their hearers. When it is not so, their influence is gone and their teaching relegated to a limbo of forgotten heresies and ignored truths. Such is the action and reaction between clergy and people, that, as a general rule, any liberal views held by the ordained ministers of one generation are widely, if not universally, adopted by the laity of the next.

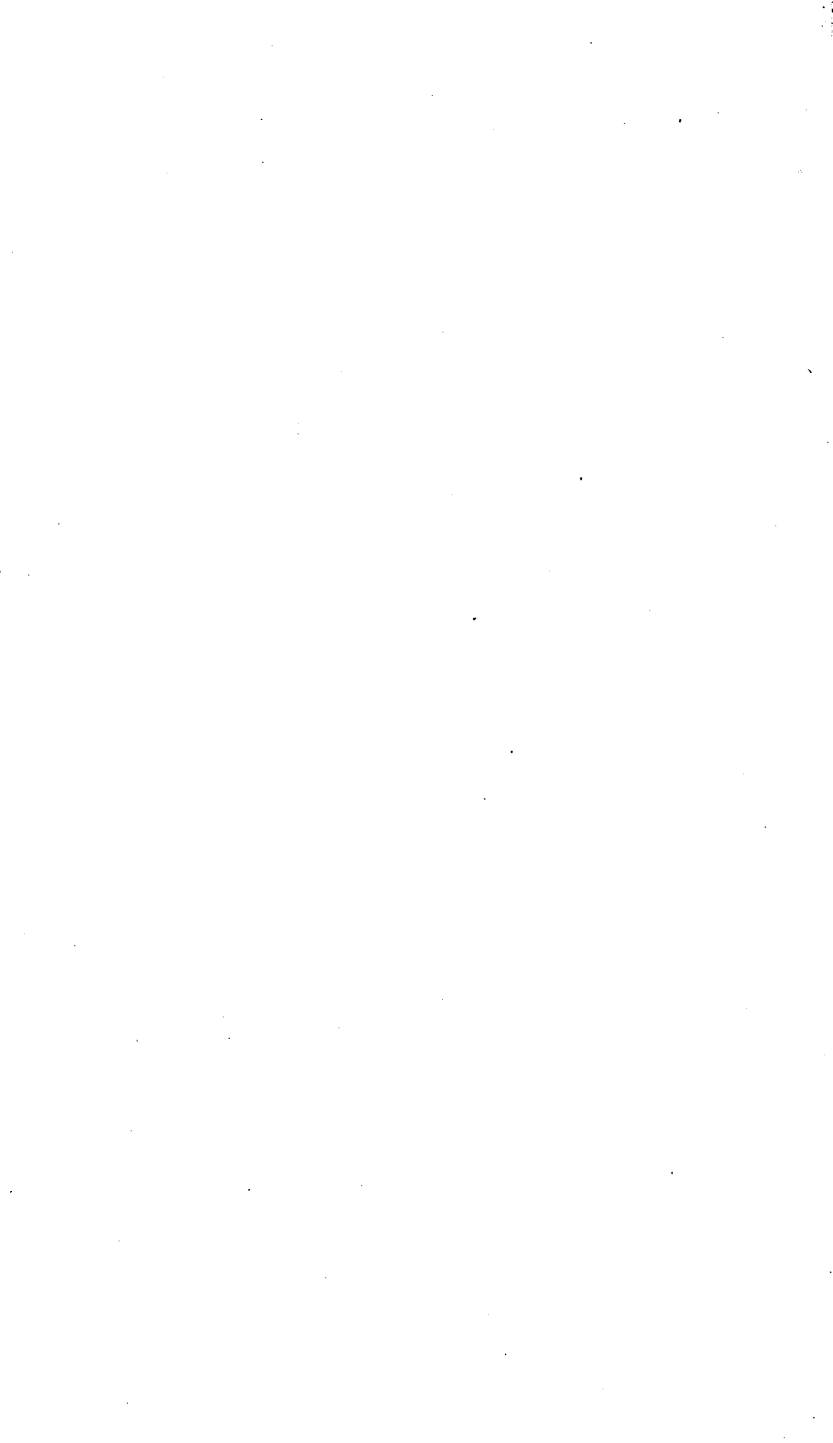
The time will come, perhaps it is not very far off, when the modifications in doctrine, demanded by the laity and granted by the clergy, will be seen to be so numerous, startling and general, that the supreme question, trifled with for so many generations, will force itself upon the attention of the Church—What was it saved our fathers? What must *we* do to be saved? Was it these changeable, doubtful doctrines, or was it something far surer and simpler? Was it reciting the Creed or keeping the Commandments? Was it obeying the letter of the Decalogue or entering into the spirit of the Beatitudes?

There is yet another point that may require a word of explanation. As this book is of a somewhat party nature, it has been thought kindest and wisest to avoid as far as possible all discussion of living Churchmen. Some might not care to be reckoned among the liberals; some again may, before they die, show themselves less fit than they seem at present to be so counted. Of course, with regard to several of our living Broad Churchmen such caution is absurd; but as it is difficult to make exceptions, their pardon is craved and the rule adhered to.

The history of religious thought in England from the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century has been so fully treated by Dr. Hunt, J. J. Tayler, and many others, that I have not thought it necessary to enter into it with any detail. My purpose is therefore, after a preliminary sketch of the history of the English Church from the earliest times to 1800, to trace, in the writings of its broad and liberal divines, from Sydney Smith to Edwin Hatch, the progress of liberal religion during the nineteenth century.

In conclusion, I would here offer my very cordial thanks to those friends who have shown most kind interest in my work, even when they have not altogether approved of it; also to the librarians and attendants of the British Museum Reading-Room, of Lambeth Palace Library, of Sion College, and of the London Library for their unfailing courtesy and patience.

A. I. F.



DOGMA AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

SECTION I.—*From the Beginning to the Reformation.*

AT no time in her history has the English nation willingly submitted to the authority of the Pope. The union of Church and State, with the supremacy, even in matters spiritual, of the sovereign have been claimed over and over again by the government, and generally with the full consent of the people.

From the earliest times the temporal and spiritual powers have been closely united. "The English bishops," says J. R. Green, "were at first royal chaplains, and their diocese was naturally nothing but the kingdom."¹ Both Mr. W. G. Brooke² and Canon Fremantle³ have amply shown how primitive was the custom for the King to be equal, if not superior, to the Primate in Church matters. William the Conqueror, though he might have

¹ Short History of the English People, p. 29.

² Introduction to Six Privy Council Judgments, by W. G. Brooke.

³ Introduction to Broderick and Fremantle's Ecclesiastical Judgments of the Privy Council.

been expected to submit to the power to which he was so greatly indebted for his new kingdom, was, on the contrary, "the one ruler of his time who dared firmly repudiate the claims which were now beginning to be put forward by the Court of Rome." He refused point blank to do fealty to Gregory VII., saying, "I have never promised it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to yours." He exacted homage from bishop as from baron. He suffered none of his vassals to be excommunicated without his consent, nor permitted Papal letters to be received into the country without his leave. He allowed no synod to sit without his licence, nor admitted their decrees to be valid without his ratification.¹

During the five centuries between the Conquest of the Crown by William and the Reformation of the Church by Henry, the pretensions of the Pope were steadily opposed by the National Government. Appeal to Rome was objected to by both barons and bishops in the reign of William Rufus "as a thing unheard of without the King's leave;"² and though these appeals became afterwards common enough, they were never recognised by the law of the land. The attempt to teach Canon Law at Oxford was stopped by Stephen;³ the supremacy of the Crown over the bishops was confirmed by the Constitutions of Clarendon in 1164; and yet more strongly was the Church's independence of Rome secured by

¹ Short History of the English People, by J. R. Green, p. 823.

² Introduction to Ecclesiastical Judgments of the Privy Council, by Broderick and Fremantle, p. xxviii.

³ Introduction to Six Privy Council Judgments, by W. G. Brooke, pp. xviii.-xix.

Magna Charta in 1215. Again, in the reign of Richard II. the bishops and abbots "passed a fresh statute re-affirming that of Edward III. against the introduction of excommunication" &c ; and Parliament petitioned the King "against the presentation to benefices by the Pope."¹

England had been making ready, morally and intellectually, for the Reformation long before Luther nailed his thesis on the church-door of Wittenburg. Wyclif in the fourteenth century had denounced the corrupt and luxurious lives of the clergy, and urged that those only were worthy of their hire who were really holy and industrious. He had also claimed "the Bible as the one ground of faith" and "the right of every instructed man to examine" it "for himself."² The New Learning of the sixteenth century had brought the forces of philosophy and criticism to bear upon the tenets and practices of the Church; the Universities, under its influence, "passing," as Green says, "from death unto life."

The New Movement in England may truly be claimed as starting from the English Church, for Colet, one of its principal leaders, was Dean of St. Paul's, and Archbishop Warham was ever its steadfast friend and protector. "Would that for once," cried Colet, addressing the clergy in Convocation "you would remember your name and profession and take thought for the Reformation of the Church! Never was it more necessary and never did the state of the Church need more vigorous en-

¹ Introduction to Six Privy Council Judgments, by W. G. Brooke, pp. xxvi.-xxviii.

² J. R. Green's Short History, p. 234.

deavours. . . . We are troubled with heretics, but no heresy of theirs is so fatal to us as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy. That is the worst heresy of all!"¹

The New Learning caused no violent doctrinal rebellion, but a gradual growth of the spirit of free inquiry, free thought, and free speech. It showed no impatience of error or superstition; but taking as its ideal a virtuous life and a humble and sincere love of truth, it bid fair to drive away, by its healthy, spiritual atmosphere, all false doctrine, as well as impurity of life and manners. This slow and sure development was rather rudely broken in upon by the high-handed policy of the House of Tudor.

SECTION II.—*The Reformation.*

For real religion Henry VIII. and his children cared but little. A mixture of bigotry and indifference, though under varying forms, characterises their reigns. Fortunately the balance between the Puritan and the Catholic tendencies was kept pretty true by the opposite prejudices of Edward and Mary, and maintained, perhaps as well as circumstances would permit, by the masterly political genius and theological indifference of Elizabeth.

It is, of course, well known that England separated from Rome under Henry VIII. upon political, and not upon doctrinal, grounds. Henry placed upon his index Expurgatorius of 1529 the works of Wyclif, Knox, Luther, Zwingli, Fish and Tyndale; he persecuted the Lollards and other early Protestants; he always spoke of the

¹ J. R. Green's Short History, p. 306.

English Church as Catholic; in the Ten Articles of 1536 he made no doctrinal or ceremonial breach with Rome; and again in the Six Articles of 1539 he reaffirmed all the peculiarly Romish doctrines. He denied only the Pope's power in matters of ecclesiastical or common law. The King's attitude towards Rome agreed well with the growing spirit of national independence and loyalty in the people of England, and with the desire for free thought and reformed life among the educated classes. The contrast between the English and the Continental Reformation is most distinct. Luther, as Mr. Green has remarked in comparing him with the friends of the New Learning—More, Colet and Erasmus—"despised reason as much as any Papal dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration and comprehension. He had been driven by a moral and intellectual compulsion to declare the Roman system a false one, but it was only to replace it by another system of doctrine just as elaborate, and claiming precisely the same infallibility. To degrade human nature was to attack the very base of the New Learning; but Erasmus no sooner advanced to its defence, than Luther declared man to be utterly enslaved by original sin and incapable, through any efforts of his own, of discovering truth or arriving at goodness. . . . The divorce of the New Learning from the Reformation was complete."¹

Edward VI. inclined to a narrow and extreme Protestantism. Had he lived he might have greatly marred the comprehensive character of the Establishment; he

¹ Short History, pp. 315-16.

might have endowed a sect, where he thought to rear a Church. Mary, on the other hand, reverted to Romanism. Nevertheless, even she would not yield the supremacy of the English sovereign. The extreme and opposite views of these two monarchs helped to keep the balance true; and by their very contradictions enabled Elizabeth to guide the fortunes of the Church according to her own independent and most able judgment. For, having such a variety of conflicting Acts and Statutes to choose from, it was easier for her to pursue an independent policy than if her three immediate predecessors had been all of one mind. With a far shrewder insight into the temper and character of her people, and with a cooler and less theological turn of mind than either her father, brother or sister, she maintained without flinching the political breach with Rome, but sought as far as possible to avoid a doctrinal split—either with the Papists, or with one or other of the two great divisions of Protestantism. She would willingly have kept in the fold of the Established Church all who yet held Romish doctrines or clung to Popish ceremonials, provided they would acknowledge her supremacy. She likewise refused to join with either Luther or Zwingli, and drew up the new Liturgy and Articles so as to include both schools of Protestantism.

Bishop Jewel, in his "Apology for the Church of England," which was published in 1562, was careful to distinguish between repudiating the authority of the Bishop of Rome and separating from the Catholic Church.

He claimed to show "plainly that God's holy Gospel, the ancient bishops, and the primitive Church do make on our side, and that we have not without just cause left these men, and rather have returned to the Apostles and old Catholic fathers. . . . That there is more pith in this our cause than they thought for." "These folks," he said, speaking of the adherents of Rome, "as often as they tell us of the Church, mean thereby themselves alone, and attribute all those titles to their own selves, boasting, as they did in times past who cried, 'The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord;' or as the Pharisees and scribes did, which craked they were 'Abraham's children!'"¹

He took the Scriptures as the rule of faith, and would not tolerate the authority of traditions. He said:—

"Neither do we reason with the sword, but with the Word of God."² "As for our doctrine, which we may rightly call Christ's Catholic doctrine, it is so far off from new that God, who is above all most ancient, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath left the same unto us in the Gospel, in the Prophets and Apostle's works, being monuments of greatest age."³ His quarrel with Rome was far more on account of laxity of morals and manners than of errors in doctrine or ceremony. He said, "God's grace is promised to a good mind, and to one that feareth God, not unto Sees and Successions."⁴

Elizabeth restored to the Liturgy some passages that had been omitted by Edward as being too Popish in tone for his rigid Protestantism. With regard to the endeavour to conciliate both the Protestant parties, Dean Stanley has drawn attention to "the combination of the two tendencies [Lutheran and Zwinglian] in the words of the administration of the Eucharist. In the

¹ Part iv.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Part. v.

⁴ Ibid., Part vi.

first Prayer Book of Edward VI., which retained as much as possible of the ancient forms both of belief and of usage, the words were almost the same as those now used in the Roman Church, and as formerly in the Sarum Missal: 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.' In the second Prayer Book of Edward VI., when the Swiss influence had taken complete possession of the English Reformers, this clause was dropped, and in its place was substituted the words, 'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.' In the Prayer Book of Elizabeth, and no doubt by her desire, the two clauses are united, and so have remained ever since."¹

Similar endeavours to compromise points in dispute are to be found in the Articles as finally drawn up in 1563.

"Hence," as Fuller quaintly put it, "some have taxed [their] composers for too much favour extended in their large expressions, clean through the contexture of these Articles, which should have tied men's consciences up closer in stricter and more particularising propositions; which, indeed, proceeded from their commendable moderation: children's clothes ought to be made of the biggest, because afterwards their bodies will grow up to their garments. Thus the Articles of this English Protestant Church, in the infancy thereof, they thought good to draw up in general terms, foreseeing that posterity would grow up to fill the same. I mean these holy men did prudently pre-discover that differences in judgments would unavoidably happen in the Church, and were loath to unchurch any, and drive them off from an ecclesiastical com-

¹ Christian Institutions, p. 100.

munions for such petty differences; which made them pen the Articles in comprehensive words to take in all who, differing in the branches, meet in the roots of the same religion.”¹

The policy of Elizabeth was accepted by most of her subjects. Green says that at her accession “the third of her Council and two-thirds of the people, were as opposed to radical changes in religion as the Queen. . . . To the mass of the nation the compromise of Elizabeth seems to have been fairly acceptable. The whole of the clergy, save two hundred, submitted to the Act of Supremacy, and adopted the Prayer Book.”² She filled the vacant sees with moderate men, who in their turn put educated, moral, and earnest Protestants into the parishes as they fell vacant. All would probably have gone smoothly, Romanism might have died a natural death in England, and the whole country become quietly Protestant, if the Pope had not first forbidden the faithful to attend the new worship, and next pretended to depose the Queen. The first was met by Elizabeth with severe measures against recusancy, and a more stringent enforcement of the Act of Uniformity. The second touched a particularly sensitive chord in the hearts of Englishmen. National independence and loyalty to their sovereign were stronger characteristics than ever of the English people in the reign of Elizabeth. To have to choose between their religion and their Queen was no light matter to most Papists. If they chose the former they incurred exile, imprisonment and death; if they chose the latter, they simply added to the ranks of the Protestants. There is

¹ Church History of Britain (ed. 1837), vol. ii. p. 469.

² Short History of the English People, pp. 369-70.

no denying the fact that Elizabeth persecuted, but it was against her will, and by what she believed to be a political necessity. As Green points out, "she was the first ruler who felt the charge of persecution to be a stigma on her rule; the first who distinctly disclaimed religious differences as a ground for putting men to death."¹

There is a marked difference between the English and the Continental Reformation. All Acts of separation from Rome in England were passed reluctantly and as a general rule only upon a hostile demonstration on the part of Rome. To remain Catholic was the constant hope of the English Church. The Continental Reformers, on the contrary, sought rather to exclude each other than to merge minor disagreements, and to promote, rather than to avoid, their separation from the Mother Church.

But the most noticeable feature of the history of the Reformation in England is perhaps that the Church rulers, with a depth of insight which well-nigh compels our belief in the special guidance of the Almighty, in freeing itself from the authority of the Pope, set up no other instead. Not only in temporal matters, but also in spiritual disputes, the sovereign, represented by the Privy Council and the judges, was finally recognised as supreme arbitrator. Again, touching things necessary for salvation, the Reformed Church of England has made no pretensions to infallibility. Not the Crown, not the Houses of Parliament, not the clergy in Convocation, *not even the Bible* has authority over men's consciences and opinions. This freedom, like many other good things, was of gradual

¹ Short History, p. 401.

growth. When Henry separated from Rome he declared "that the fundamentals of religion are comprehended in the whole body and canon of the Bible, and also in the three creeds or symbols. He also recognised the authority of the 'four holy Councils.'" ¹ In the forty-two Articles drawn up by Edward VI. it was avowed that "*Generalia Concilia . . . quia ex hominibus constant, qui non omnes spiritu et verbis Deo reguntur, et errare possunt;*" thus denying the infallible authority of these four Councils, besides virtually repudiating any pretensions to finality of judgment for his own Articles. Elizabeth included the same Article in her revision of 1563, with, in some versions, the very important alteration of *verbis Dei* into *verbo Dei*; which amendment is further confirmed in the authorised translation of 1571. ² Lastly when, in 1643, the Assembly of Divines at Westminster proposed a revised version of the Articles, and some sought to close the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the attempt was frustrated. ³ Thus the Church has deliberately left the question of inspiration as much open as possible. By the guarded use of such expressions as "Word of God," and "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary for salvation," and by this golden silence respecting

¹ Hardwick's History of the Articles, p. 43.

² The Articles of Edward VI. and of Elizabeth, both in the original Latin and the English translation, will be found in an Appendix to Hardwick's "History of the Articles."

³ The proposed amendment of Article VI., after enumerating the books of the New Testament as well as of the Old, goes on thus: "All which books, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and acknowledge them to be given by the inspiration of God, and in that regard to be of most certain credit and highest authority." Hereby the ears of the Church would have been stopped to all future Biblical criticism, and its members pledged to prefer Genesis to geology, and poetry to history.

verbal inspiration, the Church was saved from the intolerable yoke of bibliolatry, and has ensured to Englishmen the Protestant rights of free thought, free search and free speech.

Since the changes in these declarations of faith have always been in favour of comprehensiveness and breadth,—as, for instance, the omission under Elizabeth of the 42nd of Edward VI., whereby those who entertained the hope that “all men may be saved at the last” were pronounced to be in error—Churchmen have reasonably felt justified in taking them as Articles of peace, intended to conciliate rather than to exclude. All parties have, when it suited their convenience, put liberal interpretations on the letter of the Articles. Moreover, they have at no time been required of the nation in general. They have never been more than a kind of text-book for divinity students and teachers; or a loose form of agreement between people and minister.

That this freedom of the Church of England, both from the trammels of a literal interpretation of Scripture and from all non-rational authority, was intentional is admitted by Hooker in the following passages :—

“ . . . We all believe that the Scriptures of God are sacred, and that they have proceeded from God ; ourselves we assure that we do right well in so believing. We have for this point a demonstration sound and infallible. But it is not the Word of God which doth or possibly can assure us that we do well to think it His Word. For if any one book of Scriptures did give testimony to all, yet still that Scripture which giveth credit to the rest would require another Scripture to give credit unto it, neither should we ever come unto any pause whereon to rest our assurance this way ; so that unless beside

Scripture there were something which might assure us that we do well, we could not think we do well, no, not in being assured that Scripture is a sacred and holy rule of well-doing.”¹

“ . . . For men to be tied and led by authority, as it were with a kind of captivity of judgment, and though there be reason to the contrary not to listen unto it, but to follow like beasts the first in the herd, they know not nor care whither, this were brutish. Again, that authority of men should prevail with men either against or above Reason, is no part of our belief. ‘Companies of learned men,’ be they ever so great and reverend, are to yield unto Reason; the weight whereof is no whit prejudiced by the simplicity of his person which doth allege it, but being found to be sound and good, the bare opinion of men to the contrary must of necessity stoop and give place.”²

“Two opinions, therefore, there are concerning sufficiency of Holy Scripture, each extremely opposite unto the other, and both repugnant unto truth. The schools of Rome teach Scripture to be so insufficient, as if, except traditions were added, it did not contain all revealed and supernatural truth, which absolutely is necessary for the children of men in this life to know that they may in the next be saved. Others justly condemning this opinion grow likewise unto a dangerous extremity, as if Scripture did not only contain all things in that kind necessary, but all things simply, and in such sort that to do anything according to any other law were not only unnecessary, but even opposite unto salvation, unlawful, and sinful. Whatsoever is spoken of God, or things appertaining to God, otherwise than as the truth is, though it seems an honour, it is an injury. And as incredible praises given unto men do often abate and impair the credit of their deserved commendation, so we must likewise take great heed, lest in attributing unto Scripture more than it can have, the incredi-

¹ Ecclesiastical Polity, Keble's edition, vol. i. pp. 293-5.

² Ibid., pp. 324-5.

bility of that do cause even those things which indeed it hath most abundantly to be less reverently esteemed. I, therefore, leave it to themselves to consider whether they have in this first point not overshot themselves; which God doth know is quickly done, even when our meaning is most sincere, as I am verily persuaded theirs in this case was.”¹

It must also be observed that the Church of England has no doctrinal test for simple membership, any creed test which has at any time been imposed being only on the clergy or teachers of the people. The non-doctrinal nature of the Church as a Church is shown in two ways:—First, by the recognition of the lay or the primitive form of Baptism. Second, by the conditions for admission to the Sacrament.

First, the English Church, together with the rest of the Western Communion, admits the validity of the Scriptural form of Baptism, that is, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” with the sprinkling of water, no matter by whom, whether clergyman or layman, man or woman, orthodox or heretic, without requiring any profession of faith at the time, nor fuller repetition of the ceremony afterwards.² Moreover, Confirmation, at which an opportunity is offered to make up

¹ Ecclesiastical Polity, Keble's edition, vol. i. pp. 335–6.

² In the last case of this kind tried in England—that of *Kempe v. Wickes* in 1809—judgment was given against a clergyman for refusing to bury the child of Dissenters, who had not been baptized according to the Church of England form. Sir John Nickoll quoted the ancient Canon Law, the Liturgies of the Reformation, and the opinions of Lyndwood, &c., to the effect that baptism performed by “layman or woman, heretic or pagan,” was valid, “provided the invocation of the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and water, were used.” These “were the *duo necessaria*.”—*Phillimore's “Report of Cases argued and determined in the Ecclesiastical Courts at Doctors' Commons,”* vol. iii.

for any deficiencies at Baptism, is not insisted on nor regarded as a sacrament. The Rubric merely says that "there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he is confirmed, or *be ready and desirous* to be confirmed." No question has ever been raised respecting the right of an unconfirmed person to be married or buried, or even to communicate, according to the orders of service in the English Church.

Second, by the Communion Rubric, the English Church shows that the test of membership is moral and not doctrinal. In the Prayer Books of Edward VI., as well as in those of Elizabeth, of James I. and of Charles II., the rules for receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper were, as now, that no "notorious evil liver," no one who has "done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended," none who, being at "variance" with another, has not forgiven "from the bottom of his heart all that the other hath trespassed against him," may partake of that Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Him who lived and died for us in perfect peace and perfect love. The preface to this most sacred ceremony of the Church is merely a commentary on the Golden Rule. The conditions of Church membership are simply that we "love one another as He also loved us"—fully, freely, unselfishly, even unto death.¹

¹ In the case of *Jenkins v. Cook*, heard on appeal before the Privy Council in 1876, judgment was given against the latter for refusing the Sacrament to the former on the ground of holding false doctrine. Lord Chancellor Cairns said:—"‘Notorious evil liver’ seems to point to moral conduct. It may be an important point whether, under the Rubrics and Canons, a clergyman is made a judge of opinion, however erroneous, of his parishioners." And Lord Penzance said:—"In the 27th Canon and in the Rubric questions of doctrine have nothing to do with the right to repel ;

There is another important item in the history of our Reformation that must not be overlooked. This is the growing claim of Parliament, as representative of the nation, to govern the Church. It was perhaps somewhat unwarrantable of the late Canon Moore to argue that Henry violated the first clause of Magna Charta¹ in passing 25 Hen. VIII. cc. 19 & 20, "whereby the Church was compelled to renounce her freedom of legislation," and "whereby her right to elect her own officers was violently taken from her."² The sole aim of the bishops and barons at Runymede, in drawing up this first clause, appears to have been to check the encroachments of Rome. They said nothing about the Church being governed only by the spirituality in those matters which as deeply concern the laity. Therefore, the claim of Parliament to legislate for the National Church seems to be as much in accordance with Magna Charta as that to impose taxes or to discuss game-laws. In passing those two Acts—which are glories rather than blots upon the Statute Book—Henry but confirmed the past, and prepared the way for a subsequent and fuller, recognition of these rights of the whole nation. As the English Constitution developed, these ecclesiastical rights became better established. Elizabeth as long as she could guarded these supposed

that right results only from the open and notorious evil life whereby the congregation has been offended."—*Moore's "Law Reports, Probate Division,"* vol. i.

¹ "In primis concessisse Deo et hac præsentī charta nostra confirmasse, pro nobis et hæredibus nostris in perpetuum:—(I.) quod Anglicana ecclesia libera sit, et habeat jura sua integra, et libertates suas illaesas; et ita volumus observari; quod apparet ex eo quod libertatem electionum." Thomson's *Magna Charta*, p. 64.

² *Reformation in England and on the Continent*, p. 121.

prerogatives of the Crown from the encroachments of the Commons. But at length she was obliged to yield. A new party was rising up in Parliament with puritanical and democratical leanings. The following is an example of this new tone in the National Assembly:—"A deputation, of which Wentworth was a member, waited (in 1571) on the Primate 'for answer touching matters of religion.' It was noticed that the version of the Articles which they were advocating dropped all mention of the Homilies, the Ordinal, and other topics which related to the hierarchy and ceremonial of the Church. The Primate, startled by the change, desired an explanation; on which Wentworth declared that certain subjects were omitted from the series because the Commons had no time 'to examine them how far they agreed with the Word of God.' 'What?' asked Parker; 'surely you mistook the matter; you will refer yourselves wholly to us therein.' . . . But Wentworth answered, 'No! by the faith I bear to God, we will pass nothing before we understand what it is, for that were but to make you popes; make you popes who list, for we will make you none!'"¹

The Queen at first refused to sanction the Articles of Religion drawn up by Convocation and passed by Act of Parliament in 1571, holding that they should proceed only from the ecclesiastical body and be confirmed by herself. But a few months later, in the same year, she accepted them from Parliament, frightened perhaps, as Hardwick suggests, by the conspiracies in favour of Mary Queen of Scots, and by the Papal bulls of excommunication and deposition against herself. By this concession

¹ Hardwick's History of the Articles, p. 149.

she admitted the claim of Parliament, as representative of the nation, to govern the Church as part of the State.

The sovereign's right to confer bishoprics has now virtually passed to the nation, in that it is the Prime Minister who nominates bishops to their sees.

With regard to the rising Puritan or Presbyterian party, Elizabeth's policy was not without grave fault. Feeling, perhaps, that she could better reckon upon the loyalty of the Nonconformists than on that of the Roman Catholics, she ventured upon stricter measures against them. Her passion for governing, her taste for a sort of military uniformity, and her love of pomp and ceremony may also have caused her to support Archbishop Parker's ritual regulations in defiance of the true interests of her Church and people. Or, it may be as Hallam suggests, that her obstinate insistence upon those ceremonies and vestments which alienated the Puritans was due to "the justice and expediency of winning over the Catholics to Conformity by retaining as much as possible of their accustomed rites."¹ As we have seen, it was the earnest endeavour of both Henry and Elizabeth to break as little as they could with the Mother Church, and to make the separation as little doctrinal and ceremonial as possible.

The final separation of England from Rome is to some extent due to the intemperate zeal of the Continental Reformers. For some time before Luther's violent attack upon the Papacy the spirit of reform had been unostentatiously busy within it. The vehement conduct of

¹ Constitutional History, Chap. iv. p. 167.

Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, however, forced her to crystallise open questions into dogmatic utterances, and prejudiced her against all criticism and reformation. Had she not been thus rudely shaken, she might, under the renovating influence of modern thought, have gradually modified her doctrine, as she has, indeed, purified her practice. In this case it would have been more probable than it now appears to be that the Churches of England and of Rome should be reconciled.

Whatever may have been Elizabeth's motives for her harshness towards the Puritans, the effect has been truly unfortunate. At the same time, it must be remembered that the Puritans were not content merely with claiming liberty for themselves in matters of ceremony and vestment, but sought to impose their taste on the nation in general. Their obstinacy was not less than that of the Episcopal party. Nor were they, as a body, a whit more willing to compromise differences for the sake of unity.

Archbishop Parker's "Advertisements" published in 1565, began this melancholy and unfortunate dispute. They never sought or obtained the sanction of Parliament, and were really little else than informal or semi-formal instructions to his diocese. The *State*, therefore, did not originate Dissent, however unwilling it may afterwards have been to receive back the Dissenters.

SECTION III.—*The Seventeenth Century.*

The claims of Parliament to be consulted on Church matters were hotly pressed with regard to the Canons of King James I. In 1603 these Canons were framed by

Convocation, with the consent of the King. They bear chiefly upon matters of Church discipline and ceremony. "Against these Canons," says Hallam, "the Commons remonstrated in a conference with the Upper House, but with little immediate effect."¹ He does not think, however, that they were ever at all strictly observed as regards the laity. They were never allowed any force against Common Law; nor, as they were not confirmed by Parliament, are they of more than secondary importance.²

Several curious rules concerning the dress of the clergy, both when on and off duty, are laid down, and are now, for the most part, looked upon as obsolete, or, if revived, are rather for party badges than for Church discipline.³ There are other enactments concerning preaching which appear to have fallen into complete disrepute. It would be interesting to know how many of our modern zealots for Canon Law are scrupulous to observe the very first Canon,

¹ Constitutional History of England, Chap. iv. p. 167.

² Ibid., Chap. v. See also Tayler's Retrospect of Religious Thought in England, pp. 78-80.

In 1865 the Canons bearing on the form of clerical subscription were altered by Act of Parliament. The rest remain as they were in 1603. No. 5 conflicts with the amended numbers, in that it requires greater uniformity of opinion of the laity than of the clergy. By this Canon it is declared that "he who affirms that any of the Thirty-nine Articles are in any part superstitious or erroneous, and such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe unto, is *ipso facto* excommunicated." So far as excommunication means deprivation of civil rights, such as witnessing, suing for debt, &c., this has always been disregarded by the courts of Common Law. Nor does it appear to have ever received ratification, at all events of late years, in its spiritual sense.

³ For instance, the use of the cope by the celebrants in cathedrals and collegiate churches, according to Canon 24, has occasioned some bad blood and unchristian feeling. Among the injunctions which may perhaps be now reckoned as obsolete is (Canon 74) that "no ecclesiastical person shall wear any coif or wrought night-cap, but only plain night-caps of black silk, satin, or velvet;" also "that they wear not any light-coloured stockings."

which requires that "all ecclesiastical persons having cure of souls, and all other preachers and readers of divinity lectures, shall to the uttermost of their wit, knowledge, and learning, purely and sincerely, without any colour or dissimulation, teach, manifest, open, and declare, four times every year at least, in their sermons and other collations and lectures, that all usurped and foreign power (forasmuch as the same hath no establishment nor ground by the Word of God) is for most just causes taken away and abolished, and that therefore no manner of obedience or subjection, within his Majesty's realms and dominions, is due unto any such foreign power, but that of the King's power, within the realms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and all other dominions and countries, as the highest power under God," &c. &c.¹

The attempt to effect a reconciliation between the Church and the Dissenters at Hampton Court in 1604 was a complete failure. Not only did the bishops outnumber the Nonconformists, but the King, by ranging himself openly on their side, threw the whole weight of his authority and prestige into the Church scale.

At the time of the Restoration another attempt at reconciliation was made, which was frustrated as much, or more, by the narrowness and bigotry of the Puritans as of the Church. There were, indeed, many points which the Episcopal party might have yielded with a good grace. But there were other demands put forward by the Presbyterians, which might, it is true, have added

¹ The Canons will be found in full in an Appendix to "The Book of Church Law," by Rev. J. H. Blunt, edited by Sir R. Phillimore.

to the Church's numerical strength at the moment, but would have eventually been harmful and have put her out of sympathy with the march of thought. For instance, it was proposed that the Burial Service should be made optional and used at the discretion of the clergyman; that the Sacrament might be refused, also at the discretion of the minister, to the sick and dying, and to the ordinary communicant; and that the form of absolution in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick might be made declarative and conditional. The bishops declined thus to limit and determine the salvation of men. It is impossible, therefore, altogether to agree with Dr. Hunt in accusing the bishops of showing themselves "not more anxious for reconciliation than for victory," and thus losing "the best opportunity that was ever offered of uniting into one Church the two great parties that represented between them the religion of the nation."¹ By their refusal to accept such alterations on the contrary they proved their loyalty to the principles of their Church, and to the interests of religion in general.

The Prayer Book was finally altered to its present form at this time. Few changes were made, and these, unfortunately, for the most part at the suggestion of the High Church faction. They "seemed purposely framed—as Bishop Burnet agrees with Baxter in declaring—rather to prevent than to facilitate any union of the two bodies."²

In 1689 a last effort was made to join together the Protestant Churches in England. Many Conformists were heartily for toleration, and many of the Noncon-

¹ History of Religious Thought in England, vol. i. pp. 295-6.

² Tayler's Retrospective History of Religious Life in England, p. 75.

formists' amendments did honour alike to their hearts and judgments: but the majority on either side would not give in, and the result of this last attempt was no better than its predecessor's. Some of the Nonconformists would gladly have joined the Church if they had not been required to give "unfeigned assent" to the Athanasian Creed, which, as they supposed, condemns to everlasting perdition the whole of the Greek Church; or to the Article—the 18th—which seems to deny salvation to the virtuous heathen.¹

Some of the suggestions made by the Dissenters were so simple and inoffensive that their rejection can only be attributed to wanton ecclesiastical pride: such, for example, as the introduction into the Litany of petitions against "all rash censure and contention," drunkenness, gluttony, sloth and misspending our time, lying, slandering, false swearing, cursing, perjury, covetousness, oppression, and injustice; changing the prayer against sudden death into against unprepared death; "praying for the virtues of humility, meekness, contentedness, and patience; of true justice, temperance, and purity; of peaceableness and charity; and for pity upon all who are persecuted for truth and righteousness' sake."² It was indeed unfortunate for the cause of religion in England that the liberal and Christian members on either side were outnumbered by the narrow and uncompromising zealots, by the lovers of victory rather than of truth, so that these real improvements were rejected.

It was also about this time that a proposal of the Upper

¹ Hunt's History of Religious Thought in England, vol. ii. p. 21.

² See Stanley's Christian Institutions, Chap. xii.

House of Convocation to substitute the Eight Beatitudes for the Ten Commandments, at the three great festivals of the Christian year, was unhappily thrown out by "the obstinate prejudices of the inferior clergy."¹

In reviewing these failures to effect a reconciliation between the State Church and the Dissenters, it must not be forgotten that many of the Episcopal clergy and laity earnestly laboured in the cause of peace and charity. Nearly all the great divines of the seventeenth century—Whichcot, Tillotson, Jeremy Taylor, Burnet, and others—constantly exhorted their congregations to tolerance and forbearance towards the Nonconformists. Laymen, too, exerted themselves to restore unity to the Protestant Church in England. This liberalism and true conception of Christianity is illustrated by two very interesting Tracts published in 1690—one entitled "*Vox Populi, or the Sense of the Sober Laymen of the Church of England concerning the Heads proposed in His Majesty's Commission to the Convocation,*" which deplores the severities exercised towards Nonconformists as being "the personal fault of our fiery zealots" and asserts "that our Church did not countenance any of these severities by her doctrine." The other is "*A Survey of the Book of Common Prayer,*" by a minister of the Church of England, which urges concessions of ceremonial in order to conciliate the Nonconformists. It gives, moreover, extracts from the sermons of contemporary English divines, some of whom are still honoured and remembered in our Church, though many of them are now well-nigh, or entirely, forgotten.²

¹ See Stanley's *Christian Institutions*, pp. 348-9.

² These Tracts are preserved in the library of Lambeth Palace.

Some of these quotations may be of interest in this connection :—

“Dr. Reynolds, in his sermon on Self-Denial, towards the end : ‘It were worth not only our fasting and prayer, but our studying, our sweating, our bleeding, our dying, to recover peace to the Church, and unity amongst brethren again.’

“Mr. Ward of Ipswich, ‘Sermons,’ p. 253 : ‘Charity—charity is the builder of churches : strife about trifles hath wasted many famous ones, and placed the temple of Mahomet where the golden candlestick was wont to stand. We pity the former ages contending about leavened and unleavened bread, keeping of Easter, fasting on Sundays ; the future ages will do the like by us.’

“Dr. More’s ‘Mystery of Iniquity’ : ‘What harm is it to presage so well of the Reformation as that, after the discussions of the years of their childhood, God will ripen them into a more manly sense of the great and indispensable duties of the Gospel ; that He will not tolerate nor connive any longer at their childish squabbling about nutshells, counters, and cherry-stones ; and menace them even with destruction if they leave not off their animosities and asperities of mind about toys and trifles, and hold fast to the royal law of love?’

“Glanvill’s ‘Catholic Charity,’ p. 17 : ‘The greatest evils that have or can happen to the Church have been the effects of the decay of charity, and of these intestine divisions that have grown up in it. From these she hath always suffered more than from external persecutions. The flames within have consumed her, when those from without have only singed her garments.’

“Glanvill’s ‘Catholic Charity,’ p. 29 : ‘Seeing, then, that charity is necessary, and agreement in opinions is neither necessary nor possible, we ought to comply with our main duty notwithstanding our lesser difference. If this were considered, unity of affection might be preserved amidst diversity of opinions.’ And p. 20, ‘Then will the Church be glorious

indeed when Christians shall make differences in opinions and dispensable practices the object of their mutual forbearance."

There is much also in good Joseph Glanvill's "Vanity of Dogmatising" to delight and amuse the reader. He was careful to disclaim any wish to make changes in theology, putting, he said, "as great a difference between our new lights and ancient truths in this science as between the sun and an unconcocted evanid meteor." He would not admit that "a sceptic in philosophy," as he proudly acknowledged himself to be, "must be one in divinity." But he condemned all dogmatism, even in religious matters, alleging that—

"This immodest obstinacy in opinions hath made the world a Babel, and given birth to disorders like those of chaos. . . . 'Tis zeal for opinions that hath filled our hemisphere with smoke and darkness, and by a dear experience we know the fury of these flames it hath kindled. . . . 'Tis lamentable that *Homo homini dæmon* should be a *proverb* among the professors of the *Cross*, and yet I fear it is as veritable among them as of those without the pale of visible Christianity. I doubt we have lost *St. John's* sign of *regeneration*. *By this we know that we are passed from death to life, that we love one another*, is, I fear, to few a sign of their spiritual *resurrection*. If our Returning Lord shall scarce find *faith* on earth, where will He look for *charity*? It is a stranger this side the region of *love* and *blessedness*; bitter zeal for opinions hath consumed it. . . . The union of a sect within itself is a pitiful *charity*; it is no concord of *Christians*, but a conspiracy against Christ, and they that love one another for their *opiniative concurrences*, love for their *own sakes*, not their *Lord's*; not because they have His image, but because they bear one another's. . . . Who can speak of such fooleries without a *satyr* (*sic*), to see aged infants so quarrel at *put-pin*,

and the doating world grown child *again*? How fond are men of a bundle of *opinions*, which are no better than a bagge of *cherry-stones*! How do they scramble for their nuts and apples, and how zealous for their petty victories!"¹

The formation of liberal Churchmen into a distinct party was the necessary consequence of the bigotry of the High Churchmen. "Disgusted," writes J. J. Tayler, "with the extremes of wild fanaticism and priestly arrogance, a set of men had arisen, after the Restoration, mild, placable, and unambitious, who sought for truth with an open and candid spirit, and studied religion in the blended lights of reason and learning."² To this party was applied the epithet Latitudinarian, on account of their indifference towards the vexed questions of popular debate.

It is not necessary to give here extracts from the writings of many of the prominent members of this school of divinity. Dr. Hunt, in his very valuable "History of Religious Thought in England," has given analyses of and quotations from Jeremy Taylor, Whichcot, Hales of Eton, Chillingworth, Tenison, Cudworth, and the Cambridge Platonists, Tillotson, Whitby, Barrow, Stillingfleet, Hoadly, Burnet and many others, showing how united they were in regarding conduct as of more importance than creed, and charity as more essential to Christianity than doctrinal accuracy and ritual precision. He tells us also how both Whichcot³ and Tillotson were accused by the Puritans of not preaching Christ, because they dwelt upon the supreme importance of righteousness.

¹ Chap. xxiii.

² Retrospective History of Religious Thought in England, pp. 107, &c.

³ Ibid., vol. i. pp. 435-8.

To which they replied that this was the very thing which Christ came into the world to preach. Tillotson said: "I do not intend to plead for any error, but I would not have Christianity chiefly measured by matters of opinion. I know no such error and heresy as a wicked life. That man believes the Gospel best who lives most according to it. . . . Of the two, I have more hopes of him that denies the divinity of Christ, and lives otherwise soberly and righteously and godly in the world, than of the man who owns Christ to be the Son of God and lives like a child of the devil!"¹

Jeremy Taylor said, in his sermon entitled *Via Intelligentiæ*, preached before the University of Dublin:—

"Christianity is all for practice; and so much time as is spent in quarrels about it, is a diminution to its interest. Men inquire so much what it is, that they have but little time left to be Christians. . . . But, therefore, since we are so very miserable, and are in error, and have wandered very far, we must do as wandering travellers used to do, go back just to the place from whence they wandered and begin upon a new account. Let us go to the truth itself, to Christ, and He will tell us an easy way of ending all our quarrels; for we shall find Christianity to be the easiest and the hardest thing in the world; it is like a secret in arithmetic, infinitely hard till it be found out by right operation, and then it is so plain we wonder we did not see it before. 'Christ's way of finding out of truth is by doing the will of God.'"²

He interpreted his text (John vii. 17) to mean, "This proposition—'The way to judge of religion is by doing our duty; and theology is rather a divine life than a divine knowledge.

¹ History of Religious Thought in England, vol. ii. pp. 100–110.

² Works, vol. vi. pp. 374–5.

In heaven, indeed, we shall first see and then love; but here on earth we must first love, and love will open our eyes as well as our hearts; and we shall then see, and perceive, and understand.'"¹

"Many ways," he continued, "have been attempted to reconcile the differences of the Church in matters of religion, and all the counsels of man have yet proved ineffective; let us now try God's method; let us betake ourselves to live holily, and then the Spirit of God will lead us unto all truth."²

No one who has read "Holy Living" can doubt the sincerity of Bishop Taylor's love of goodness rather than of metaphysics.

The title of a work published in 1699 by Edward Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, shows plainly that the moral, as opposed to the doctrinal, character of Christianity was clearly recognised at this time. It ran thus: "The Design of Christianity; or, A Plain Demonstration and Improvement of this Proposition, viz., That the enduing Men with inward Righteousness, or true Holiness, was the ultimate End of our Saviour's coming into the World, and is the great Intendment of His blessed Gospel."³

The forces of criticism and philosophy made themselves felt in theology from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards. The influence of Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke was already considerable. In 1662 Charles II. founded the Royal Society. It was "patronised by the liberal Churchmen, and opposed by the old theologians. . . . The Society had among its most earnest members

¹ Works, vol. vi. pp. 378-9.

² Ibid., p. 404.

³ This work can be found in the collection of "Tracts" published by Bishop Watson in 1791.

many High Churchmen, who, in the simplicity of their hearts, believed that natural knowledge was independent of religion.”¹

Joseph Glanville, in an Essay on the Usefulness of Real Philosophy to Religion, said in conclusion :—

“We see, upon the whole, that there is no shadow of reason why we should discourage or oppose modest inquiries into the *works of Nature*; and whatsoever ignorant zeal may prompt the common sort to, methinks that of generous education should not be of so perverse a frame; especially it becomes not any that minister at the altar to do so great a disservice to religion as to promote so unjust a conceit as that of philosophy being an enemy unto it.”²

The stories of Adam and Eve, the Fall, &c., were held by Bishop Burnet as “Eastern fables or myths, which, though not literally true, represent some moral truths. . . . ‘His theory of the earth’ was mainly founded on Scripture, but under the guidance of the avowed principle that the authority of Scripture was not to be employed concerning the natural world in opposition to reason. . . . In ‘*Archæologiæ Philosophiæ*’ Burnet takes greater licence with the literal meaning of the Scriptures. He doubts if the serpent ever had the power of speech. He does not regard the six days’ work as creation out of nothing, but only as formation. He is not disposed to regard even the six days as literal, and he lays down broadly the principle that Moses, after the Eastern custom, spoke of physical subjects in veiled or figurative language. He ‘passed by, for the most part, physical

¹ Hunt’s History of Religious Thought in England, vol. ii, p. 174.

² Essays on Several Important Subjects in Philosophy and Religion.

truth,' and followed 'moral, or rather theological, reasons in his narration of the world's original.'" ¹ Burnet also denied the resurrection of the present body.

SECTION IV.—*The Eighteenth Century.*

The rationalism of theology in England during the eighteenth century is universally acknowledged.

The assailants as well as the defendants of Christianity appealed to reason rather than to sentiment; to argument rather than to authority. Not only this, but as Mr. Leslie Stephen frankly admits, "on the side of Christianity, indeed, appeared all that was intellectually venerable in England."² While Dr. Hunt says: "The majority of the eighteenth century divines were rationalistic. They argued interminably, if calmly and philosophically, upon metaphysical points. They all claimed that the Christian religion is rational, but they appear to have neglected to enforce its practical and ethical character."³

This, indeed, is the prevalent defect of the theology of the last century. In it metaphysics predominated over religion. It is no doubt better to argue and criticise and prove our creed than to accept it servilely. But the tendency of preferring once more theory to practice, with its consequent dangers of indifference to questions of charity and humanity, is painfully evident. One wishes one could have found less of head and more of heart among these ecclesiastics.

¹ Hunt's History of Religious Thought in England, vol. ii. pp. 223-5.

² History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, vol. i. p. 86.

³ History of Religious Thought in England, vol. iii. p. 98.

Speaking of the writings of the eighteenth century divines the late Rector of Lincoln says, "No quality of these 'Discourses' strikes us more now than the good sense which pervades them. They are the complete reaction against the Puritan sermon of the seventeenth century. We have nothing far-fetched, fanciful, allegoric. The practice of our duty is recommended to us on the most undeniable grounds of prudence. . . . It is one man of the world speaking to another. Collins said of St. Paul, "that he had a great respect for him both as a man of sense and a gentleman." He might have said the same of the best pulpit divines of his own time. They bear the closest resemblance to each other, because they all use the language of fashionable society and say exactly the proper thing.

"Not only the pulpit, but the whole theological literature of the age takes the same tone of appeal. Books are no longer addressed by the cloistered academic to a learnedly educated class; they are written by popular divines . . . for the use of fashionable society. . . .

"Among a host of mischiefs thus arising one positive good may be signalised. If there must be debate, there ought to be fair play; and of this publicity is the best guarantee."¹

Mark Pattison seems to overlook here, as elsewhere, that the English Church is, or should be, synonymous with the people; and also that the English, being independent and self-helpful, will never suffer their clergy to domineer over them. The eighteenth century served, at

¹ Mark Pattison's *Essays*, vol. ii. pp. 67-72.

least, to keep alive that most excellent tradition of the equality of pulpit and pew, of clergy and laity; and to save the Church from being priest-ridden and dogmatic.

But all the divines of the eighteenth century were not merely cold theologians. There yet remained some true prophets of the Lord; as, for instance: Hoadly, Blackburne, Arthur Ashley Sykes, Hey and Watson. These grasped clearly the fundamental principle of Christianity, and preached diligently charity, tolerance, and liberality.

Bishop Hoadly caused great flutterings among the doves of peace by his sermon on the "Nature of Christ's Kingdom," preached in 1717 before George I., for which he was accused of being at once a Papist, a Latitudinarian, and an Atheist. He identified the visible Church with the kingdom of Christ, which "is not of this world" — thereby, so his critics averred, denying the Royal Supremacy. He certainly desired to recall men's minds to apostolic doctrine and to wean them from submission to any human authority in matters of faith. He began his sermon by pointing out "the alteration of the meaning annexed to certain sounds" brought about by "length of time." "For instance," he said, "religion in St. James' days was virtue and integrity, as to ourselves, and charity and beneficence to others; before God, even the Father (James i. 27). By degrees it is come to imply, in most of the countries throughout the whole world, the performance of everything, almost, except virtue and charity; and particularly a punctual exactness in regard to particular times, places, forms, and modes, diversified according to the various humours of men; recommended

and practised under the avowed name of external religion; two words which, in the sense fixed upon them by many Christians, *God hath put asunder*; and which, therefore, *no man should join together*. And, accordingly, the notion of a religious man differs in every country, just as much as the times, places, customs, imaginary austerities, and all other outward circumstances are different and various. Whereas, in truth, though a man, truly religious in other respects, may make use of such things, yet they cannot be the least part of his religion, properly so called, any more than his food, or his raiment, or any other circumstance of his life.”¹

In his tract called “A Dedication to Pope Clement XI.,” written, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says, “in the ironical style so popular in the days of Swift, Arbuthnot, and Defoe,” Hoadly “claims a close resemblance between Papists and Protestants. All the Protestant sects admit their fallibility, and differ in their conclusions, and yet all are ready, within their own limits, to enforce their own opinions, by prison and the gallows. The difference is, he says, that ‘you *cannot* err in anything you determine, and we never *do*; that is, in other words, that you are infallible, and we always in the right.’”² And finally, after summing up various proofs of a persecuting spirit, and of the approximation of the English clergy to Roman superstitions, he concludes: ‘I believe in time no man of sense will be able to see any difference between your Popery and that of many amongst us, but that *ours* is *Protestant Popery* and yours is *Popish*

¹ Collected Works, 1773, vol. ii. pp. 402-3.

² Ibid., vol. i. p. 535.

Papery.'¹ Protestantism with him," continues Mr. Stephen, "means the unrestricted right of private judgment, and that right excludes all claims to priestly authority. . . . He is striking at the heart of sacerdotalism. A priest is one who claims Divine authority for his words, whose privileges are secured by a Divine grant, and who can wield certain powers in virtue of his sacred character. Hoadley substantially denies the validity of these claims."²

Dr. John Hey, in his "Divinity Lectures," was exceedingly candid and free in his criticisms. He admitted the varieties of readings in the Scripture text, and argued that the original books are probably lost—the copies that we now have differing from one another in many particulars; and that we have no authority whereby to decide which is right.³ He advised his hearers to look to the general principles of Scripture rather than to particular instances in applying them.⁴ "If men must hold all the same opinions," he said, "in order to worship together, no two men could join in religious duties. But, properly speaking, it is not unity of *opinion* we want, but united *action*. . . . *Some* likeness of opinion may be wanted, . . . but not *total* coincidence. . . . In general, separations are apt to seem more necessary than they really are. It is not about fundamental doctrines, or about doctrines level to the human judgment, that men are apt to divide, but about those which are most peculiar to a few, and most obscure and difficult; yet it

¹ Collected Works, vol. i. p. 544.

² History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, vol. ii. pp. 156-8.

³ See vol. i. p. 29.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 335-8.

can scarce ever be really important to divide about these.”¹ He begged public teachers “to choose such subjects as were least likely to give offence.” “Separations and hurtful dissensions,” he added, “might be avoided by patience, forbearance, and candour on the part of private individuals.”² Mr. Stephen quotes the following passage from his “Lectures” (i. p. 367):—“We and the Socinians are said to differ; but about what? Not about morality or natural religion, or the Divine authority of the Christian religion. We differ only about what we do not understand, and about what is done on the part of God; and if we allowed each other to use expressions at will (and what great matter could there be in what might almost be called unmeaning expressions?), we need never be upon our guard against each other.”³

Archdeacon Blackburne criticised a charge of Bishop Butler’s, in which the latter had exhorted his hearers, as a remedy for the irreligion of the age, to a more strict attendance to the outward forms of religion, such as keeping saints’ days, and other external observances. “This,” Blackburne answered, “might be true of such religions as the Pagan, the Mohammedan, or the Roman Catholic; where the form was really the essential. But it was not true of Christianity, whose essence was a spirit and a power that were independent of form. . . . Jesus has described the true worshippers as they who worship in spirit and in truth. . . . The Gospel has left us free as to external observances, just that we might be more intent

¹ Divinity Lectures, pp. 335–8.

² Ibid., pp. 358–9.

³ History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, vol. i. pp. 424–5.

upon the spiritual and essential parts of religion. . . . It was just the ceremonial part of the law of Moses that Jesus abolished. . . . Blackburne denied that Butler's method of restoring religion by restoring the form was either Christian or Protestant."¹

Bishop Watson Dr. Hunt speaks of as "the representative bishop of the Liberal party in the Church at the end of the last century and the beginning of this. From every point, whether as a Christian or as a citizen, he advocated freedom of all opinions, and the utmost liberty in examination and inquiry."²

"I certainly dislike," he said, "the *imposition* of all creeds formed by human authority; though I do not dislike them as useful summaries of what *their compilers believe* to be true, either in natural or revealed religion."³

"What are the Catechisms of the Romish Church, of the English Church, of the Scottish Church, and of all other Churches, but a set of propositions, which men of different natural capacities, educations, prejudices, have fabricated (sometimes on the anvil of sincerity, oftener on that of ignorance, interest, or hypocrisy) from the Divine materials furnished by the Bible? And can any man of an enlarged charity believe that his salvation will ultimately depend on a concurrence in opinion with *any* of these niceties, which the several sects of Christians have assumed, is essentially necessary for a Christian man's belief? Oh, no! Christianity is not a speculative business. One good act performed from a principle of obedience to the declared will of God will be of more service to every individual Christian than all the speculative theology of Augustine, or Athanasius, or Freylinghausen."⁴

¹ Hunt's History of Religious Thought in England, vol. iii. pp. 313-15.

² Ibid., pp. 351-4.

³ Life of Bishop Watson, Charges, Apologies, &c., vol. i. p. 395.

⁴ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 215.

"Nor is the defence of the Christian religion abandoned, when we allow unbelievers full liberty of producing all the arguments they can in support of infidelity. Our liberality in this respect proceeds not from any supineness, or inattention towards what we esteem of inestimable value, but from a total dislike of dogmatism and intolerance, and from a strong persuasion that the result of the most careful scrutiny into the foundations of our faith will be a confirmation of its truth.

"The time, I think, is approaching—or is already come—when Christianity will undergo a more severe investigation than it has ever yet done. My expectations as to the issue is this—that Catholic countries will become Protestant, and that *Protestant countries will admit a further Reformation.*"¹

These appeals and exhortations to liberality, charity, and tolerance resulted in the endeavour of 1772 to amend the form of clerical subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles so as to admit of greater latitude in the Church. Archdeacon Blackburne was a principal mover in this attempt.² Before this time efforts had been made in the same direction. As early as 1690 a tract³ had been presented to Convocation "on behalf of the Conformable clergy," discussing "whether our subscription be expressive of our assent unto and belief of the truth of every one of the subscribed Articles, or only an assurance that, for the sake of peace, we will not contradict nor oppose them." In it quotations were given from Chillingworth, Usher, Bramwell, and others, showing that they believed the Articles to be of "peace, not of faith." Burnet's exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles was written on purpose to show that they were capable of several interpretations.

¹ Life of Bishop Watson, Charges, Apologies, &c., pp. 449-50.

² Hunt's History of Religious Thought, vol. iii. pp. 355-7.

³ This tract is to be found in the library of Lambeth Palace.

The attempt in 1772 known as the "Feather's Tavern Petition" failed chiefly through the opposition of Burke and of the Methodists and Evangelical clergy. Paley sympathised with the petition, but would not sign it, as he said "that he could not afford to keep a conscience"! It is curious that Butler and Paley, both deservedly suspected of rationalism and heresy in their day, should be regarded as the standards of orthodoxy in ours. Truly the heretics of yesterday are the leaders of to-day and the fathers of to-morrow.

It must be frankly admitted that religion lost ground in England during the eighteenth century. Theology—doubtless a liberal and philosophic theology—was all the Church had to offer to satisfy the spiritual hunger of the nation. The misery and apathy of the poor, the selfishness of the rich, and the moral degeneration of all classes have been described too often to need to be repeated here. The soul of the nation, tired out by the excitements and turmoils of the last two centuries, seemed asleep. If it is wholesome that the spirit should sleep now and then, like the body, it may be due to this torpor of the eighteenth that the nineteenth century has shown such an increase in political, social, and religious activity. More than this, the talking in its sleep of the eighteenth will, doubtless, hereafter be found to have been of great service to religion in England. For one thing, it has helped to destroy the remnant of superstitious veneration for theological matters. "Holy mysteries" are, thanks to the common-sense of the eighteenth century, less and less spoken of amongst us. Furthermore, it has taught us to separate metaphysics from religion. Though it

undoubtedly gave too great prominence to the former, it saved the nation from mysticism and fanaticism concerning the latter. It has made Englishmen "try the spirits," "prove all things," learn "to give an answer to every man that asketh 'them' a reason of the hope that is in 'them.'" More than this it did not do. It did not establish Christian doctrine on sure ground either of faith or of reason. "If the religious history of the eighteenth century proves anything," says Mark Pattison, with his usual unsparing truthfulness, it is this :—

"That good sense, the best good sense, when it sets to work with the materials of human nature and Scripture to construct a religion, will find its way to an ethical code, irreproachable in its contents, and based on a just estimate and wise observation of the facts of life, ratified by Divine sanctions in the shape of hope and fear, of future rewards and penalties, of obedience and disobedience. This the eighteenth century did, and did well. . . . But there its ability ended. When it came to the supernatural part of Christianity its embarrassment began. . . . The philosophy of common-sense had done its own work; it attempted more, only to show, by its failure, that some higher organon was needed for the establishment of supernatural truth. The career of the evidential school, its success and failure,—its success in vindicating the ethical part of Christianity and the regulative aspect of revealed truth, its failure in establishing the supernatural and speculative part,—have enriched the history of doctrine with a complete refutation of that method as an instrument of theological investigation."¹

¹ Essays, vol. ii. pp. 85-6.

It has been the business of the nineteenth century prophets to accomplish two things: First, to show plainly that these honourable attempts to popularise a rational Christianity are not, after all, of vital importance; and that the Christian religion is neither belief nor disbelief in the Trinity, the Miracles, the Atonement, the Inspiration of Scripture, and the Eternity of future punishment. Second, they have tried by that "higher organon" to which Mark Pattison refers, to establish upon a sure and reasonable basis so-called revealed or supernatural truth. In the execution of this duty they have met with little encouragement either from the friends or foes of theology. Still, it has been a brave attempt, and one not without great promise of ultimate success. It may be that the twentieth century will take up the task of the eighteenth, and by the help alike of the metaphysical acumen and of the righteous enthusiasm of the nineteenth, render Christianity at once popular and rational.

CHAPTER II.

SYDNEY SMITH.

1769-1845.

THE history of the Liberal Movement in the English Church of the nineteenth century could not begin better than with Sydney Smith. He is the principal link between the Liberalism of the eighteenth and the Broad Churchism of the nineteenth century. By his nervous dread of anything approaching to emotion and fanaticism, or, as he called it, enthusiasm, he showed his descent from the Latitudinarianism of the past; by his sympathy and tenderness for sin and sorrow, by his zeal for humanity, by his fearless support of the claims of liberty, equality, and fraternity—or, in other words, of freedom of thought and speech and of Christian charity,—he marked the transition to the Broad Churchmanship of the present and the future.

It is to be feared that Sydney Smith's reputation as a wit and a teller of good stories has somewhat eclipsed his fame as a progressive thinker and teacher. A contemporary said of him, "If he had not been known as the wittiest man of his day, he would have been accounted one of the wisest"¹ and this seems to have been his fate even among the later generations, who are usually the

¹ *Memoirs of Sydney Smith*, by Lady Holland, vol. i. p. 458.

best judges. Still, we must not be ungrateful for his jokes. The example of a wise man who could also be merry is not to be despised in a somewhat pharisaic age and nation. "His jokes were sermons," said Byron, and "his sermons jokes." The latter part of the distich is wide of the truth. Humorous preaching was not in fashion in those days, and Sydney Smith's sermons were as grave and dignified, though not as pompous, as those of his brethren. The former half, however, of Byron's witticism has a good deal of truth in it. Witness the definition of dogmatism as "grown-up puppyism;" or the suggestion, with a sigh and a smile, that perhaps "the creatures we see in the solar microscope tear one another to pieces for difference of opinion." Possibly, if the fame of his wit had been less, the memory of his courage and generosity, both in his sermons and in his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*, would have been stronger.

During his whole life, in all his writings, he was ever on the side of right, truth, and liberty. In all the range of English theological literature, so far as I am acquainted with it, few volumes of pulpit discourses can be compared with those of Sydney Smith, for liberality, common-sense, and Christian charity; for beauty of language and depth of feeling; for boldness of thought and loftiness of tone. His sermons were eminently practical. He held, without questioning, the main tenets of theology,—but he never enforced them harshly or intemperately. He dreaded all approach to disbelief, and was even inclined to condemn as wantonly wicked those who avowed infidel opinions. He made no direct effort to release people from doctrinal bondage; but he was tender and charitable towards those

who were "tempted to doubt." His main criterion was Conduct; his chief endeavour was to make people good. He did not shrink from censuring evil in high or low, in rich or poor; and he was as unsparing of the sins of unkindness, censoriousness, and malice as of drunkenness, lying, and unchastity. "Is the passport to heaven written anywhere else than in a pure heart?"¹ he cried. His conception of the Christian religion is well shown in the following passage, upon preaching as it was—unhappily as it too often still is—and as it should be:—

"Preaching has become a by-word for long and dull conversation of any kind; and whoever wishes to imply, in any piece of writing, the absence of everything agreeable and inviting calls it a sermon.

"One reason for this is the bad choice of subjects for the pulpit. The clergy are allowed about twenty-six hours every year for the instruction of their fellow-creatures; and I cannot help thinking this short time had better be employed on practical subjects, in explaining and enforcing that conduct which the spirit of Christianity requires, and which mere worldly happiness commonly coincides to recommend. These are the topics nearest the heart, which make us more fit for this and a better world, and do all the good that sermons ever will do. Critical explanations of difficult passages of Scripture, dissertations on the doctrinal and mysterious points of religion, learned investigations of the meaning and accomplishment of prophecies, do well for publication, but are uncongenial to the habits and tastes of a general audience. Of the highest importance they are to those who can defend the faith and study it profoundly; but God forbid it should be necessary to be a scholar or a critic in order to be a Christian."²

¹ Quoted from a sermon in "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 91.

² Preface (never reprinted) to a volume of Sermons published 1801. Quoted in "Memoirs," vol. i. pp. 81-2.

Or again :—

“The true Christian, amid all the diversities of opinion, searches for the holy in desire, for the good in council, for the just in works; and he loves the good, under whatever temple, at whatever altar, he may find them.”¹

Speaking upon the sins of intolerance among the Churches of Christendom, he said :—

“It proceeds from our supposing that there is only one road to heaven; whereas, God Almighty be thanked, there are many roads to heaven. . . . Can I paint God as the protector of one Christian creed, deaf to all prayers, blind to all woes, but ours? . . . Foolish, arrogant man has said this, but God has never said this. He calls for the *just* in Christ; He tells us that through that name He will reward every good man and accept every just action.”²

In another sermon he said :—

“The fact is, and the plain truth must be told, that an intolerant spirit, though it often proceeds from a mistaken zeal for religion, often proceeds also from mere personal insolence; offended pride that any man should presume to think differently from you on these subjects; . . . that he should dare to differ from you in some religious ceremonies, which you have always been taught to consider of the last importance, and refuse conversion too. The affairs of religion become a mere question of pique and passion; each man feels his understanding insulted, and would call in the civil power if he could to disgrace and disqualify his antagonist, declaring to others, and firmly believing himself, that he is actuated only by an earnest zeal for the glory of God and the dearest interests of religion.”³

¹ Memoirs, vol. i. p. 93.

² Sermons (1846), pp. 6-7.

³ Ibid., p. 9.

Sydney Smith exerted himself strenuously and unselfishly in the cause of the English Papists. His was the *one dissentient voice* at a meeting of the clergy of the diocese of York, in which he held a living, to petition against the emancipation of the Catholics. He bravely drew up a counter petition praying for their relief. When, in 1828, he was given a stall at Bristol Cathedral, he at once availed himself of the 5th of November service to preach against religious animosities and persecutions.

“A great deal of mischief is done,” he said, “by not attending to the limits of interference with each other’s religious opinions,—by not leaving to the power and wisdom of God that which belongs to God alone: Our holy religion consists of some doctrines which influence practice, and of others which are purely speculative. If religious ceremonies are of the former description, they may, perhaps, be fair objects of human interference; but if the opinion is merely theological and speculative, there the right of human interference seems to end, because the necessity for such interference does not exist. Any error of this nature is between the Creator and the creature,—between the Redeemer and the redeemed. If such opinions are not the best opinions which can be found, God Almighty will punish the error, if mere error seemeth to the Almighty a fit object of punishment. Why may not man wait if God waits? Where are we called upon in Scripture to pursue men for errors purely speculative?—to assist Heaven in punishing those offences which belong only to Heaven?—in fighting unasked for what we deem to be the battles of God,—of that patient and merciful God who pities the frailties we do not pity,—who forgives the errors we do not forgive,—who sends rain upon the just and unjust, and maketh His sun to shine upon the evil and the good?”¹

¹ Works (1840), vol. iii. pp. 363-4.

He distinguished very forcibly between true and false religion in the following passage:—

“Imagine not that statute praise and written adoration can atone for a dissipated, selfish, uncharitable life, or that the postures of our bodies will be taken for the sin of our souls; mere devotion, barren of good actions, differs in nothing from the gross idolatry of Pagan worship. Flocks and hecatombs are as good as gestures and words; they offered up the blood of a victim, and you the breath of a man. . . . In what did the folly of these religions consist but that they thought every idle object of sense more acceptable to the Deity than the firm dominion over bad passions, and the noble exercise of aid and mercy to mankind? . . . ‘Not every one,’ says our Saviour, ‘who sayeth unto Me, Lord! Lord! but he that doeth the will of My Father, which is in heaven.’ In truth, the first condition of piety is much easier than the last; it is easier to cry ‘Lord! Lord!’ than to do His will; it is easier to extol His attributes than to imitate them, even at the humblest distance. . . . It is more difficult to forgive an injury, to embrace an enemy, to stop a bitter word, or to sacrifice a beloved pleasure to charity, than to repeat a liturgy of prayers; yet remember the words: true religion and undefiled before God the Father is this—to visit the fatherless and widows in affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. These are the real sacrifices to God; there is more joy in heaven over one good deed than over ninety and nine solemn supplications which bring forth no good deed.”¹

“The genius of the Gospel is to discourage the pomps and ceremonies of worship; . . . it attaches no importance to outward trifles.² . . . Christ taught His countrymen that the only useful knowledge was the knowledge of God’s will, and the only true religion to do it; . . . [He] poured forth His

¹ Sermons, 1809, vol. ii. pp. 251–3 (on True Religion).

² Ibid., p. 314 (on the Character and Genius of the Christian Religion).

immortal precepts of goodness and wisdom, that He might make the earth gentle, and fill it with the spirit of charity."¹

"The great object of every human being should be his progress in righteousness."²

Sydney Smith never met with anything approaching to his just reward in the Church of which he was so great an ornament, and for whose well-being he did so much. He was more than a year in London before he could even obtain a hearing. "I have as yet found no place to preach in," he wrote; "it is more difficult than I had imagined. Two or three random sermons I have discharged, and thought I perceived that the greater part of the congregation thought me mad. The clerk was as pale as death in helping me off with my gown, for fear I should bite him."³ The Foundling and Berkeley Chapels gave him a hearing, though but poor pay. He was afterwards for many years buried in the wilds of Yorkshire. A Canonry in Bristol, given when he was in his fifty-eighth year, and six years later one at St. Paul's, were all the distinctions he received. He was in some respects before his time, which is always a misfortune from a worldly point of view. Then, too, he was not properly understood, even by his friends and admirers. Of his very real qualifications for high office in the Church they knew little and thought less. The tact, common-sense, and power of organising he displayed in his country parishes were known and appreciated only by a few. His brilliant conversational gifts, his courage

¹ Sermons, 1809, vol. ii. p. 320.

² Ibid., 1809, vol. i. p. 360 (on the Sabbath).

³ Memoirs, vol. i. p. 113.

and truthfulness in the pulpit, were rather looked upon as disqualifications by the general public. People delighted in his eloquence and enjoyed his society, but were nervous of putting him in a high place, or of making themselves in any way responsible for what they thought his eccentricities and audacities. Therefore, though they admired his sermons and laughed at his jokes, they prudently forgot him whenever there was any question of preferment.

All the same, his influence has been very great, if not always acknowledged; the good begun by him has, indeed, "as a river run and broader flowed." That he felt the neglect and ingratitude of his countrymen is undeniable. "The law," he said, "is decidedly the best profession for a young man, if he has anything in him. In the Church a man is thrown into life with his hands tied, and bid to swim; he does well if he keeps his head above water."¹ "His real charge against me," he wrote on the subject of his not receiving the preferment which he felt to be his just due, "is that I am a high-spirited, honest, uncompromising man, and whom he and all the bench of Bishops could not turn upon vital questions; that is the reason why, so far as depends on others, I am not a bishop."²

Martyrdom is not only by fire and sword. A man ardent to serve his country and his Church, and zealous to vindicate the honour of his God, suffers a far more acute form than ever did those who perished at the stake or were torn by wild beasts. Though Sydney Smith was one of the most brilliant diners-out of his

¹ *Memoirs*, p. 372.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 284-5.

day, though he ate and drank and was merry, though he had cordial admirers and troops of friends, still bitterness was often in his soul. To feel within him the power to do, and to lack the opportunity to use that power, caused him, we are told, many a sorrowful hour. The curse of his wit was very great. With all his goodness, with all his piety, he was the round man in the square hole. He may truly be reckoned first of the martyrs, as well as first of the prophets, of the English Church in the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER III.

HERBERT MARSH—EDWARD STANLEY—REGINALD
HEBER—RICHARD HAMPDEN—EDWARD HAWKINS.

HERBERT MARSH (1758-1833), Bishop of Peterborough, was the first to introduce German Biblical criticism into England. He translated "Michaelis on the New Testament." He did nothing directly towards rationalising any of the generally received doctrines of the English Church; but he was careful to insist on her fallibility, urging his hearers to be moderate in expressing their own views, and to be tolerant in judging those of others. Speaking of the Church of England, he said, "Though we *believe* we are right, we admit that we are *possibly* wrong; though we believe that others are *wrong*, we admit that they are *possibly* right; and hence we are disposed to tolerate their opinions."

EDWARD STANLEY (1770-1849), Bishop of Norwich, taught most eloquently by his life the principles of a large charity. He was on the best possible terms with the Dissenters of his diocese. He eagerly united with them in all practical work for the benefit of the poor and ignorant. He was severely censured for subscribing to the publication of a work by a Unitarian of whose practical Christianity he was persuaded. He exhorted his

clergy to show always, towards those who differed from them in opinion, a Christian spirit of forbearance. He had no dread of truth from any quarter; he even inaugurated lectures on Geology and Natural History in his parish of Alderley, and encouraged the school children to make collections of botanical and other specimens. He was the prime mover in the attempt of 1842 to obtain a relaxation of the form of clerical subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. He rejoiced in the comprehensive nature of the English Church, and held it up as an example to his clergy of tolerance and charity in their dealings with those who differed from them, whether within or without the fold of the Establishment.

“We have in our own pale,” he said in his first charge to the clergy of Norfolk, “opinions of almost endless variety, Calvinists, Arminians,—and what Christians can differ more widely? . . . I do not notice this wide comprehension of opinion as a blot upon the Church of England; on the contrary, I mention it as an example worthy of your imitation in your dealings with those fellow-Christians who differ from you both within and without our own fold. Those of you who, being dutiful sons of the Church of England, yet find it hard to feel kindly and charitably towards these erring brethren whom she has included, should remember that they are acting in opposition to her comprehensive spirit . . . If they can live at peace with one another within the same forms, why should not conscientious Dissenters and conscientious Churchmen live, I do not say within the same forms, but within the same feelings of Christian love and harmony?”¹

He likewise exhorted his clergy to be practical in their sermons.

¹ *Memoirs and Charges of Bishop Stanley*, edited by Dean Stanley, first edition, pp. 67, &c.

"Not that I mean," he said, "by using this term practical that it should lead to an exclusion of doctrine; on the contrary, such is the tendency of the leading doctrines of our faith, that they supply the motives to Christian action more powerfully and impressively than anything else. Always bring forward these doctrines, but bring them forward only in their practical and true point of view."¹

REGINALD HEBER (1783-1826), Bishop of Calcutta, though thoroughly orthodox on all other points, and emphatic in his insistence on doctrinal accuracy, admitted the possibility of error in the Scriptures.

"A written document may properly be called inspired when the sentiments and ideas which its words convey are suggested by the Holy Ghost; though the words in which those sentiments are clothed be entirely left to the human and unassisted genius of the writer."²

"A composition may merit the name of inspired though the ideas only, and not the forms of expressing them, be suggested by the Spirit of God; . . . so will even this be completely sufficient for those ends for which only inspiration has ever been accorded, 'for doctrine,' that is, 'for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.'"³

RICHARD HAMPDEN (1793-1868), Bishop of Hereford, was not a Broad Churchman; he was not even a liberal Churchman. Quite unintentionally, however, he did much for the cause of free thought in England. Could he have foreseen some of the actual results of his Bampton Lectures of 1832 he would probably never have delivered them. He was not the man to trust truth to take care of itself. This was not because he had no convictions, but, on the

¹ *Memoirs*, p. 156.

² *Bampton Lectures*, 1815, p. 473.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 477.

contrary, because he had too many ; not because he lacked faith in God, but from lack of faith in human reason. He believed implicitly in the authority of the Scriptures. He appears never to have heard of any disputed translations, any varieties of reading, any interpolated passages in Holy Writ. He simply questioned all the deductions of human reasoning. His aim was to destroy the superstructure of doctrine built, by the Fathers and the Schoolmen, upon what he called Scripture facts.

"I insist," he said, "on Scriptural truth as distinct from human truth, the doctrines of God's Word as distinct from the commandments of men. In short, I would have Christian doctrine rested on Scriptural evidence, and not on human argumentation."¹

This he amplified repeatedly, as, for instance, in the following:—

"... Assuming, however, that there is a clear case of inspiration established in regard to our sacred books, . . . and that this inspiration extends to all matters pertaining to the kingdom of God which we are concerned to know,—it follows that whatever is recorded in these books is indisputably true, and that nothing independent of these books, or not taken from them, can possess the same authority—not to say in *degree* only, but even in *kind*. For this is *Divine* truth ; whatever is distinct from it is *human*. So that in the history of doctrines, when we look to their Scriptural source, we may affirm that whatever is first is true, whatever is of a second period is corrupt."²

"... So far as doctrines are deductive statements—conclusions drawn from the facts, or words, of Divine revelation—they may be examined by that reason which deduces them."³

¹ Introduction to the Bampton Lectures, third edition, p. lvii.

² Lecture VIII., pp. 356–7.

³ Ibid., p. 353.

He was careful to explain in the introduction to the second edition "that the inquiry pursued in the Bampton Lectures leaves the *matter* of Christian doctrine untouched. It is one thing to inquire into the *mode* of statement, . . . and another thing to inquire into the *matter* or *substance* of the truth stated. A truth, whether we call it a fact or a doctrine, is quite independent of any particular mode of statement."¹

"Dogmas of theology, *as such*, are human authorities. But do I mean to say by this, that they are unimportant in religion, or that they are essentially wrong, foreign to true religion, and inconsistent with it? I wish rather to establish their importance and proper truth, as distinct from the power and verity of the simple Divine Word."²

"The use and importance of dogmatic theology are to be estimated from its relation to the social profession of Christianity. It is, in regard to Christianity, what political institutions are in regard to the social principles of our nature. As these principles are the real conservative causes of human society, . . . so are the dogmas of theology enforcements by established barriers of the saving, quickening truths of the Gospel."³

In accordance with these principles he proceeded to examine the developments of some of the main articles of the Christian faith in the hands of the Schoolmen, to "show the vanity of such reasonings as theirs when applied to the exposition of revealed truth," and to "trace their influence on our theological language."⁴

Not only did he set forth the complications brought about by attempts at metaphysical niceties in such a

¹ Introduction, p. xxi.

² Lecture VIII, pp. 375-6.

³ Ibid., p. 383.

⁴ Introduction, p. lxvi.

matter as predestination or justification, but also in that of the Trinity. He observed that the examination of the Trinitarian controversies,—

“has forcibly impressed on my mind the conviction that the principal, if not *the only*, *difficulties* in the doctrine of the Trinity arise from metaphysical considerations—from abstractions of our own mind, quite distinct from the proper, intrinsic mystery of the holy truth in itself.”¹ . . .

“. . . The only ancient, only catholic truth is the Scriptural fact. Let us hold that fast in its depth and breadth—in nothing extenuating, in nothing abridging it—in simplicity and sincerity; and we can neither be Sabellians or Tritheists or Socinians. Attempt to explain, to satisfy scruples, to reconcile difficulties, and the chance is that, however we may disclaim the heterodoxy which lurks on every step of our path, we incur, at least, the scandal at the hands of others, whose piety, or whose prejudices or acuteness, may be offended by our words.”²

The advocates of dogmatic theology were not blind to the probable results of such teaching. They pointed out that several of what are commonly considered the cardinal doctrines of Christianity—such as the Being of God, the Trinity, the Inspiration of Scripture—are nowhere plainly revealed in the Bible, are not therein stated as *facts* in Dr. Hampden’s sense of the word, but are simply deductions from Scriptural texts, and consequently, according to Dr. Hampden, “not properly religious truths,” nor necessarily belonging “to the scheme of human salvation through Christ.”³

The alarm and irritation of the rising Tractarian

¹ Lecture III., p. 145.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 149–50.

³ See Hampden’s *Observations on Religious Dissent*.

school is easily imagined. The author of the "Essay on Development" and his party could not but feel indignation and fear of such teaching as that of the Bampton Lectures of 1832. The contrast between the writings of Newman and of Hampden is highly instructive. Both started with the assumption of the authority of Scripture: the one, claiming, in addition, the authority of a Church to protect and expand Scripture truth, has given to the world a generally logical and consistent body of doctrine; the other, denying any inspiration after the Apostolic age, has consequently given to the world a *reductio ad absurdum* of dogmatic belief. Between these two books and their results, modern Englishmen have chosen and must choose.

The conflict between dogmatism and anti-dogmatism reached its climax at this time. Cardinal Newman has said expressly that the "fundamental principle" of the Oxford Movement was "the principle of dogma. My battle was with liberalism; by liberalism I meant the anti-dogmatic principle and its developments."¹ Since that era victory has steadily inclined towards the anti-dogmatic party. Many of the extreme dogmatists have followed Newman to Rome; of the remaining English Churchmen, whether ordained or unordained, the majority may be said to be all more or less inclined towards liberalism. Consequently the Cardinal was obliged to add, in a later edition of his "Apologia," that liberalism is now "scarcely a party; it is the educated lay world."²

The publication of his pamphlet on "Religious Dissent"

¹ *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, first edition, p. 120.

² Edition 1883, p. 261.

was the immediate cause of the outcry against Hampden. In this he merely advocated the removal of doctrinal tests on entering the university. Arguing that the object of a university being educational, it was not sound policy to assume in the candidates for admission so great a knowledge of divinity as is involved in subscription to the Articles. The views expressed in this pamphlet are substantially the same as those in the Lectures:—namely, that where there is general agreement upon the *facts* of Scripture, as he called them, or, as we should say, on the main doctrines of theology, diversities of opinion on minor matters may coexist.

When Hampden was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford by the Crown, in 1836, the Tractarian party raised great opposition; they carried their point in Convocation so far that he was excluded from the board for choosing select preachers and so forth, and candidates for orders were exempted from attendance at his lectures, other professors being appointed whose teaching was to be accepted instead. His office could not be taken from him, as it was the gift of the Crown. A few of the bishops, however, had the good sense and loyalty to require the candidates who came to them to produce the customary certificate from the Regius Professor of Divinity. In 1842 the University practically rescinded the obnoxious statute of 1836 by appointing Hampden head of the board of theological examiners. But the Tractarians prevented the formal repeal of the original statute, thus leaving the University in a somewhat ridiculous position. When, in 1847, Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, appointed Hampden to the See of Hereford great stir was made

throughout the country. Petitions were got up and pretty generally responded to, twelve bishops signing, besides a great number of the clergy and laity. The thirteen other bishops, for various reasons—not always from sympathy for the Bishop-Designate and his views—protested against the opposition. The Prime Minister firmly maintained his belief that the appointment would “tend to strengthen the Protestant character of our Church, so seriously threatened of late by many defections to the Church of Rome.” The Dean of Hereford, upon receiving the usual *congé d’élire*, signified his determination not to vote for Dr. Hampden. To this Lord John tersely replied: “Sir, I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 22nd inst. in which you intimate your intention of violating the law. I have the honour to be, &c.¹ The statesman seems to have acted more under the guidance of the Holy Ghost and by faith in the providence of God than either the rebellious Dean or the agitated bishops. To elevate to high honour one who had candidly discussed questions of theology, apparently without fear of the consequences, was indeed likely to strengthen not only the Protestant but the Christian character of our Church.

Once established in his bishopric, Hampden settled down into hopeless orthodoxy. He even persecuted in a mild way: he sided with Bishop Phillpots against Mr. Gorham; he desired the condemnation of Mr. Ward’s ‘Ideal Church;’ he was opposed to the Maynooth grant, and voted against the Jewish Relief Bill. He pooh-

¹ See Concise History of the Hampden Controversy, Pamphlet, British Museum, London Library, &c.

pooched Colenso's "Biblical Criticisms," saying there was little in them, and that what there was had been answered before, and so on. Nothing could have been more conventional than his preaching or more tame than his submission to orthodoxy. "Dr. Hampden," Dean Stanley wrote in an article on the Oxford school, "will remain a singular example of a man on whom ecclesiastical persecution produced the effect of stifling the flames of intellectual energy."¹ He was no leader, no reformer, no pioneer, and yet the effects of his ill-written, ill-digested but learned, weighty and unanswerable critique may be traced in many modern Churchmen, and have been acknowledged by Arthur Stanley and Mark Pattison.²

EDWARD HAWKINS (1789-1882), Provost of Oriel, was rather a moderate High Churchman than an Erastian or Broad Churchman. There were, however, some liberal, even advanced, passages in his Bampton Lectures of 1840. For instance, he said on Inspiration:—

"Doubtless, for their proper and intended purpose, the Scriptures are perfect, but not so for all imaginable purposes; not even for some which have been supposed to come within their range, as, for instance, the purpose of teaching, or even stating correctly, truths of natural science, astronomy, or geology."³

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, 1881, pp. 307-9.

² Some have been pleased to insinuate that these Bampton Lectures were seldom or never really read. That they went through three editions and were at one time "in great demand" is some evidence to the contrary.

³ Bampton Lectures, pp. 60-1.

He did not join with those who regret the indirect and unsystematic form of doctrine in the Scriptures, but said :—

“ Assuredly there is enough and too much in the Church of Christ of that strong tendency to formalism in ourselves and uncharitableness towards others which contents itself with repeating the language of orthodoxy, or exacts from other men the most scrupulous and literal adherence to every word and phrase in our own Confessions of Faith.”¹

It is some indication of the state of Biblical criticism in England at this time that Dr. Hawkins could say with thanksgiving: “ Amidst the unbelief around us, and numberless discussions within the Church of Christ, the authority of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament, maintained even by the most determined adversaries of the Christian faith, is almost, if not altogether, undisputed; whilst those of the New Testament, with very few exceptions, have been received with one consent by every Christian community.”²

¹ Bampton Lectures, pp. 62-3.

² Ibid., pp. 41-2.

CHAPTER IV.

RICHARD WHATELY.

1787-1863.

WITH the exception of Arnold, Archbishop Whately was the most advanced Churchman of his day. His ecclesiastical policy was different, but not less liberal. He desired the civil and political freedom of all denominations—Roman Catholics and Jews alike—but objected to Parliamentary legislation in Church matters by members of other religious bodies. “Everything relating to the spiritual concerns of the Church,” he held, “should be entrusted to a commission, or to some body of men, members of that Church, having power to regulate those concerns in such a manner that may be most conducive to the interests of that religion and to the spiritual welfare of the people.”¹ He desired that the Irish should “reform their own Church, . . . without its coalescing any more with the Church of England than did those of Thessalonica, Philippi, and Corinth, which,” he said, “I imagine were perfectly friendly, and yet perfectly independent. . . . I think this sort of variation is so far from breaking the bond of peace that it is the best preservative of it.”² He entered very little into general questions of

¹ *Life*, vol. i. p. 189.

² *Ibid.*, p. 109.

Church government, being naturally more taken up with special Irish affairs. His friends regretted his loss to the English Church by his elevation to the See of Dublin. He was much distressed by the Hampden persecution, and would probably have been able to stop it had he still been head of Alban Hall.

He did little directly towards rationalising the Church, but taught always and at all times the duty of both allowing and encouraging free, independent thought; he always deprecated party-spirit, bigotry, and persecution; he maintained unflinchingly the power of Truth to protect herself, without the aid of sophistry or deceit. "Do not adopt my opinions because *they are mine*," he used to say to a young pupil early in his life, "but judge for yourself."¹ "The subject he chose for his Bampton Lectures," writes his daughter and biographer, "was one which much occupied his mind through life—'the evils and dangers of party-spirit.' He often observed afterwards that in this choice of subject he felt he was, as it were, 'burning the bridge behind him,' and committing himself to a life-long combat against the evil he denounced."²

Though he set the beauty of holiness very high, he hardly rated conduct as of more importance than doctrine. Indeed he was careful to show that practice must, and could only, be the fruit of sound faith. For example, preaching on St. James i. 27, he pointed out that the word which the Apostle used does not mean religion in our sense, but "religious exercises," and that his intention was to contrast "the ceremonial observances of the Jews with the benevolent actions of the Christians." The Arch-

¹ Life, vol. i. p. 32.

² Ibid., pp. 43-4.

bishop on this occasion protested against the "bad use" to which the text had been not infrequently "perverted."¹

But in general Whately dwelt upon the practical nature of Christianity, and bade his readers and hearers constantly to keep in mind that they should seek in Scripture

"not only for truth, but for *practical* truth, with a view to the improvement of our life and heart: this is an express condition on which spiritual aid in enlightening the understanding is promised: 'If any man is willing to *do* the will of God, he shall *know* of the doctrine.' We must seek, therefore, in the Scriptures, by the aid of Him who gave them, not for speculative knowledge respecting the intrinsic nature of God or the human soul, but for practical knowledge concerning the *relations* existing between God and the soul of man, that we may be enabled to serve and please Him the better, and that 'the inspiration of His Holy Spirit may cleanse the thoughts of our hearts,' and fit us for enjoying the more immediate presence of our Master in His triumphant kingdom."²

He was careful, also, to warn against the danger and error of putting belief before conduct and resting satisfied with bare acknowledgment of the truth and beauty of morality, without trying to practise it. In his essay "On the Dangers arising from Injudicious Preaching," he cautioned his readers that the result of such lip-service would be "that the morality of the Christian religion becomes a thing to be talked of and admired, rather than practised; and men's only sedulous attention is concentrated on the rectitude of their belief, the confidence of their hopes, and the fervour of their devotions."³

¹ Sermons Preached in Dublin, pp. 393, &c.

² Essays on the Writings of St. Paul, p. 234.

³ Essays on Dangers to the Christian Faith. p. 11.

He continued:—

“Now, in respect of the particular point before us, it is certain that our Lord and His apostles did not content themselves with simply declaring the connection of Christian faith with moral conduct, and then bestowing all their culture on the tree, leaving that to bring forth its own fruits as a matter of course, but insisted earnestly and frequently on the *care* and *exertion* requisite both in respect of a Christian life generally and of several particular points of duty.”¹

“In fact, there always has been in every age, and always will be while human nature continues, a liability to self-deceit on this point: . . . a tendency to *satisfy* and quiet the conscience by placing the whole of religious duties in something altogether apart from moral conduct.”²

Though he spoke of seeking to justify ourselves before God “by strict *moral*ity” as “an error,” he yet seems to have thought it a less deadly error than that of seeking justification by ceremonialism:—

“You will generally find, for one person who seeks to justify himself by the practice of moral virtue, twenty who rely on external ordinances and compliance with positive rules.”³

Archbishop Whately held that the main doctrines of the Christian faith were revealed and quite above discovery by human reasoning. He gave *practicalness* as the criterion of a true revelation, and spoke of this being the “peculiar feature” of the Christian religion.⁴ He was at pains to show that even the most speculative doctrines of the New Testament, such as the Incarnation,

¹ Essays on Dangers to the Christian Faith, p. 12.

² Ibid., p. 14.

³ Ibid., pp. 25 and 29.

⁴ Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion, p. 280.

the Sanctification by the Holy Ghost, and the Trinity, have a practical bearing. For instance, he said:—

“As the doctrine of the Trinity may be considered as containing a summary and compendium of the Christian faith, so its application may be regarded as a summary of Christian practice, which may be said to be comprised in this: that, as we believe God to stand in three relations *to us*, we also must practically keep in view the *three corresponding relations* in which, as is plainly implied by that doctrine, we stand *towards Him*; as, first, the creatures and ‘children of God;’ secondly, as the ‘redeemed and purchased people’ of Jesus Christ; and thirdly, as ‘the temple of the Holy Ghost,’ our Sanctifier.”¹

Speaking of the Trinity, we may note that in the Appendix, on Ambiguous Terms, to his “Logic,” Whately commented at some length on the use of the word *persona* by the Schoolmen, and the unfortunate reproduction of their mistake by the English translators of the Athanasian Creed. He said: “It is probable that by *persona* it was intended to express the same as by the Greek word *hypostasis*, ‘that which stands under (*i.e.*, is the subject of) attributes,’ . . . that though divine attributes belong to all and each of these, yet there are attributes of each, respectively, which are not so strictly applicable to either of the others as such.”² For this he was accused of Sabellianism, but was never refuted—for the simple reason, I suppose, that refutation was impossible. A long word, even if of doubtful applicability, is an ever-welcome stone to cast at an opponent, and generally counts for an argument in theological controversy.

¹ Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion, p. 247.

² Logic, ninth edition, p. 215.

Though he was no friend of Rationalism, as he understood the word, he suffered no mock abasement of human reason. He said :—

“‘The pride of human reason’ is a phrase very much in the mouth of some persons, who seem to think they are effectually humbling themselves by an excessive distrust of all exercise of the *intellect*, while they resign themselves freely to the guidance of what they call the heart; that is, their prejudices, passions, inclinations, and fancies. . . . If a man employs his reason, not in ascertaining what God *has* revealed in Scripture, but in conjecturing what might be, or ought to be, the Divine dispensations, he is employing his reason wrongly, and will err accordingly. But this is not the *only* source of error. He who, to avoid this, gives up the use of his reason, and believes or disbelieves, adopts or rejects, according to what suits his feeling, taste, will, and fancy, he is no less an idolater of *himself* than the other; his feelings, &c., being a part of himself no less than his reason. We may, if we please, call the one of these ‘a Rationalist’ and the other an Irrationalist, but there is as much of the pride of self-idolatry in the one as in the other.”¹

He was earnest in his denunciations of the sin and folly of tampering with truth; or of shrinking from following the truth in matters of religion. He spoke of the “heresy of indifference” as being “the most deadly of all errors, not excepting atheism,” and reminded his readers how “our Lord points out truth as, in an especial manner, the character of His religion.”

“Do Christians,” he asked, . . . “speak and act altogether consistently with a religion which is built on *faith* in the

¹ Essays on the Writings of the Apostle Paul, pp. 28-9.

² Ibid.

truth? The prophets of such a religion ought not merely to believe it in sincerity, but to adhere scrupulously to truth as the *means* employed on every occasion, as well as in the ends proposed; and to follow fearlessly *wherever* truth may lead."¹ "It is one thing," he observed, "*to wish to have truth on our side*, and another thing to wish sincerely to be *on the side of truth*." ²

"The greatest, however, of all the obstacles to the habit of following truth is the tendency to look in the first instance to the *expedient*. . . . He who does not begin by preaching what he thoroughly believes will speedily end by believing what he preaches. His habit of discriminating the true from the false—the well established from the doubtful—will soon decay for want of assiduous exercise; and thus inured to the practice of dispensing with complete sincerity for the sake of supposed utility, and accustomed to support true conclusions by *any* premises that offer, he will soon lose, through this faulty practice, even the power of distinguishing what conclusions *are* true." ³

" . . . It springs from, and it will foster and increase, a want of veneration for truth; it is an affront put on the 'Spirit of Truth;' . . . it is on this ground that we should adhere to the most scrupulous fairness of statement and argument. . . .

"On the same principle, we are bound never to countenance any erroneous opinion, however seemingly beneficial in its results, to connive at no salutary delusion (as it may appear), but to open the eyes (when opportunity offers, and in proportion as it offers) of those we are instructing, to any mistake they may labour under, though it may be one which leads them ultimately to a true result, and to one of which apparently they might otherwise fail." ⁴

He gave as examples of doctrines which some continue to teach after they themselves have ceased to believe

¹ Essays on the Writings of the Apostle Paul, p. 8.

² Ibid., p. 19.

³ Ibid., pp. 28-9.

⁴ Ibid., p. 30.

them, from fear of unsettling men's minds, the plenary inspiration of the Bible, "its complete and universal infallibility, not only on religion, but also on historical and philosophical points;" even the correctness of the English version, and the obligations of "the moral precepts of the Levitical Law."

"... Though the desired conclusions," as he observed, "may in these and similar cases be reached by the paths of truth, there will be an apparent, and sometimes a real, danger that those who have been long used to act rightly on erroneous principles may fail of those conclusions when once deceived. In such cases it requires a thorough love of truth and a firm reliance on Divine support to adhere steadily to the straight course. . . .

"Lastly, as we must not dare to withhold or disguise revealed religious truth, so we must dread the progress of no *other* truth. . . . Any theory on whatever subject, that is really sound can never be inimical to a religion founded on truth; and any that is unsound can be refuted by arguments drawn from observation and experiment, without calling in the aid of revelation. If we give way to a dread of danger, from the 'inculcation of any Scriptural doctrine, or from the progress of physical or moral science, we manifest a want of faith in God's power, or in His will, to maintain His own cause.'" ¹

With regard to the question of the inspiration of Scripture, Whately readily admitted the possibility of error in matters of science, philosophy, and history. The character of a true revelation he took to be, "that it teaches us what is needful for us to know, but little or nothing besides; that the information it imparts is such

¹ Essays on the Writings of the Apostle Paul, pp. 31-4.

as concerns the regulation of our character and practice, but leaves our curiosity unsatisfied.”¹

“Meanwhile, our care must be, during our state of trial here below, not to imagine our knowledge more complete than it is; nor to expect from the Scriptures such information as they were not meant to supply. We must not study them as designed to convey, as it were, in terms of art, the speculative truths of philosophy; but must seek, in the first instance at least, and with the greatest diligence, such truths as are relative to man, and practical.”²

Whately did not allow any special authority to the traditions and interpretations of Scripture by the Church. He preferred the Bible to orthodoxy, and attached no peculiar or priestly importance to the clergy. He said that,

“... popularly, when a man is spoken of as ‘orthodox,’ this is understood to imply conformity to what is *received and maintained* as the right faith by the majority of the most influential theologians of the age and country in which he lives, or in which those live who so describe him. This *may*, indeed, coincide perfectly with the right sense of Scripture; but we cannot be sure that it will always be so, unless we regard those theologians as infallible. *These*, then, must be made the standard,—their mode of study and their interpretations followed—by one who is bent on being ‘orthodox.’³

“And in referring to and studying the Scriptures, though no infallible interpretation is to be found or hoped for,—no system of general directions that will absolutely secure us against mistake; yet there are two maxims especially, . . . which, studiously dwelt upon, and perpetually recalled to our

¹ Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion, pp. 221-2.

² Essays on the Writings of St. Paul, p. 174.

³ Ibid., p. 24.

thoughts, will prove a safeguard against many and various errors. The one is, to remember that in studying the Scriptures we are consulting the Spirit of *Truth*, and therefore must, if we hope for His aid, search honestly and earnestly for the *truth*, not for a confirmation of our preconceived notions, or a justification of the system or the practice to which we may be inclined.”¹

Of the clergy he said:—

“It is not the most flattering to them to be urged to say continually, not only in words, but by their conduct, ‘We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord, and us, your servants for Christ’s sake;’—to be taught that they are merely the functionaries of the particular Church of which they are members,—that it is in that capacity only that they derive their station and power from Christ, by virtue of the sanction given by Him to Christian communities; and that their authority, therefore, comes direct from the society, so constituted, in whose name and behalf they act, as its representatives, just to that extent to which it has empowered and directed them to act.”²

He approved of articles, creeds, and established liturgies as means of holding a Church together, and as “a barrier against the intrusion of material error.”

“By reference, then, to the Articles and the Liturgy, let each false doctrine or irregular practice be exposed and checked as it arises; not, however, by an appeal to these avowedly human compositions, as if they were to decide (instead of the Scriptures themselves) what doctrines are to be *received* as part of the Christian faith, but as decisive of the question, who ought, and also ought not, to remain a member of our Church.”³

¹ Essays on the Writings of St. Paul, p. 233.

² Essays on the Kingdom of Christ, p. 212.

³ Bampton Lectures, No. VIII.

He thought "the Apostles were supernaturally restrained from drawing up creeds, liturgies, and formularies; that it was thanks to this they can be varied according to the requirements of different countries and times;" and he blamed the Church of Rome for exalting "the creeds and formularies, &c., which are sanctioned by tradition and by the enactments of a Church, to a level with the Scriptures."¹

He was a believer in the efficacy of the Sacraments; for he spoke of admission "to a share in the *offer* of" the grace of the Holy Spirit, being by Baptism; which ordinance, he said, is not "a sign only of admission into the visible Church," but also of "spiritual regeneration;" because "the promises of Christ are made to the society of which He is the Head; and to individuals, not as *men*, but as *members* of that society."²

It is said that it was Whately's custom, when prayer was made against persecutions, to add privately "that we may not be persecutors."³ In accordance with this is the following eloquent and characteristic denunciation of the bigotry that results from party-spirit:—

"Of these effects, the most obvious and the most shocking is the extinction of Christian charity, and of that spirit of meekness, forbearance, and benevolence which are characteristic of the Gospel. If one should go through Paul's description of charity, reversing every point in the detail, he would have no incorrect description of party-spirit, as it has appeared in almost all ages of the Church. Party-spirit 'is not long-

¹ Cautions for the Times, pp. 440-4.

² Essays on the Writings of the Apostle Paul, pp. 226-7.

³ See Stanley's Christian Institutions, p. 239.

suffering nor kind ;' party-spirit 'envieth, vaunteth itself, is puffed up ;' (making men feel a pride in their own party, and hostile jealousy towards all others). Party-spirit 'seeketh her own ;' (narrowing men's views to the welfare of their party, and inclining them to sacrifice the interests of all others to it). Party-spirit is 'easily provoked ;' 'thinketh evil ;' (being ever ready to attribute to an adversary the worst motives and designs) ; 'rejoiceth in iniquity and rejoiceth not in truth ;' (catching eagerly at every unfair advantage, and leading to an indifference about Gospel truth, which was the object originally professed)."¹

¹ Bampton Lectures, pp. 65-6.

CHAPTER V.

THOMAS ARNOLD.

1795-1842.

THE subject of this chapter may be described as the first Englishman, since the Reformation, who was both a clergyman and a statesman. There had been laymen who specialised in Church politics; there had been clergymen who influenced national politics; there had been ecclesiastics who endeavoured to separate Church and State: but since Laud there had been no such ecclesiastical statesman as Thomas Arnold. Up to his day divines had generally followed the lead of laymen in Church policy, had criticised or justified, explained or condemned, but had not originated. But since his day the clergy have begun to understand the mutual dependence of the ordained and the unordained, and have mingled effectively in Church government and Church reform.

Arnold was not a theologian. For metaphysics he cared nothing. He was essentially a statesman, a patriot, and a Christian. He belonged to the liberal party in politics, and was a founder of the, as yet unnamed, Broad school in Church matters. "It would be delightful to me," he wrote, "to see a work sincerely Christian which

should be neither High Church nor what is called Evangelical."¹ On certain points he sympathised with both parties, on others with neither; on others again he was in opposition to each.

His sermons are characterised by a simplicity, earnestness, and practicalness less common in his day than—thank God—at present. He said in the preface to the first volume of them, published in 1829:—

“There is an extreme reluctance amongst many who are very zealous supporters of the outward establishment of Christianity to admitting its principles in the concerns of common life, in matters belonging to their own trade or profession, or, above all, in the conduct of national affairs. They will not tolerate its spirit in their everyday practice, but ridicule it as visionary and unpracticable. . . . It appears to me that a sermon addressed to Englishmen in the nineteenth century should be very different from one addressed to Englishmen in the sixteenth, or even in the eighteenth; and still more unlike one addressed to Greeks or Asiatics in the first. . . . And if this seems no better than a truism, yet the truth, which is almost self-evident in theory, has been by no means generally attended to in practice. On the contrary, one sort of phraseology has commonly been handed down in religious compositions from generation to generation; and their language, instead of assimilating itself as closely as possible to that in common use, has studiously preserved a character of its own.”²

Arnold held firmly and preached constantly those doctrines which he considered the essential elements of the Christian religion, viz., “The revelation of what God has done for us, or will do for us in Christ, the great doc-

¹ Life and Letters, vol. i. p. 49.

² Sermons (edition 1878), vol. i., Preface, pp. vii.–viii.

trines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us, and our resurrection hereafter to an existence of eternal happiness or misery.”¹ Nevertheless, he always insisted upon the necessity of showing the fruits of righteousness, and translated these doctrines into practical exhortations. He had no interest in purely speculative questions; still less was he at any pains to rationalise them.

For instance, he said:—

“A false criterion of ‘fundamental errors’ has been set up, in measuring the importance of the error to us by the excellence of the object to which it relates. This has caused men to lay so much stress on all opinions that relate to God. And, indeed, opinions of His moral attributes are of the last importance, because such as we suppose Him to be morally, such we strive to become ourselves; but opinions as to His nature metaphysically may be wholly unimportant, because they are often of such a kind as to be wholly inoperative upon our spiritual state: they neither advance us in goodness, nor obstruct our progress in it.”²

Or, again, he said:—

“Doctrines not used as principles of life; that is, coupled with the moral conclusions for the sake of which they are revealed, are no better than theoretical truth, with which Christianity has nothing to do.”

He spoke, moreover, of

“... that most wicked doctrine which St. James condemns, namely, that if a man’s opinions about God be right, he need care nothing about his affections and conduct.”³

¹ Sermons on the Christian Life, its Course, its Helps, its Hindrances, p. 296.

² Principles of Church Reformation, Miscellaneous Works, p. 335.

³ Sermons on Christian Life, its Course, &c. (edition 1842), pp. 365, &c.

From the following passage we may see that Arnold did not fail to recognise moral conduct as being of far more importance than doctrines and opinions:—

“This is the difference between positive ordinances and moral: the first serve their appointed number of generations by the will of God, and then are gathered to their fathers and perish; and the latter are by the right hand of God exalted, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. . . .

“The practical conclusion is, that, whilst we hold fast, with an undoubting and an unwavering faith, all truths which, by their very nature, are eternal, and to deny which is no other than to speak against the Holy Ghost, we should listen patiently to, and pass no harsh judgment on, those who question other truths not necessarily eternal, while they declare that they are, to the best of their consciences, seeking to obey God and Christ. . . . When we say, as has been said, that where men’s lives are apparently good and holy, and their doctrines are against those of the Church, the holiness is an unreal holiness, . . . that is, in fact, denying the Holy Ghost’s most infallible sign—the fruits of righteousness; and being positive rather of the truth of the Church than of the truth of God. There is nothing so certain as that goodness is from God; nothing so certain as that sin is not from Him. To deny, or doubt this, is to dispute the greatest assurance of truth that God has ever been pleased to give us. It does not by any means follow that all good men are free from error, nor that error is less error because good men hold it; but to make the error which is less certain a reason for disputing the goodness which is more certain, is the spirit, not of God, nor of the Church of God, but of those false zealots who put an idol in God’s place; of such as rejected Christ and murdered Stephen.”¹

The doctrines on which he laid most stress were the Atonement and future punishment; but both of these he

¹ Sermons (edition 1878), vol. iv. pp. 255-7.

treated in the interests of morality. There is, indeed, some suspicion of "*other worldliness*" in his exhortations; this, however, is largely condoned by the vigour of his crusade against sin and by the purity of his ideal. Gratitude to God for the plan of salvation must, he taught, result in deeds of love and kindness to our neighbours, fear of God's judgment, in diligent self-examination and self-denial. He was careful to insist, though somewhat perfunctorily, upon the obligation of charitable acts being done deliberately, for Christ's sake:—

"There is something so delightful in kindness," he said,—the noble soul entangled in his creed,—"so natural in the wish to please and to relieve—so exceedingly sweet in the consciousness of having done good to others, and in receiving the return of their grateful love—that I am afraid our charity is very often unsanctified; we think of our suffering brethren only, without remembering who it is that puts Himself forward in their forms to receive our love, and if we will but see Him, to take in their behalf the office of overpaying all that we can do to them. We see not Christ in those who need our charity; we see not God in our ability to relieve them. . . . There is no real goodness (in our conduct), there is even no safety from condemnation, unless we glorify God through Jesus Christ." ¹

He had little or no sympathy for positive disbelief:—

"I confess," he wrote in 1832 in a private letter, "that I believe conscientious atheism not to exist. *Weakness of faith* is partly constitutional, and partly the result of education and other circumstances; and this may go intellectually almost as far as scepticism—that is to say, a man may be perfectly unable to acquire a firm and undoubting belief of the great

¹ Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 147-9.

truths of religion, whether natural or revealed. . . . I am satisfied that a good man can never get further than this; for his goodness will save him from unbelief, though not from the misery of scanty faith. I call it unbelief when a man deliberately renounces his obedience to God and his sense of responsibility to Him, and this never can be without something of an evil heart rebelling against a yoke which it does not like to bear. . . . And here, I think, is the moral fault of unbelief—that a man can bear to make so great a moral sacrifice as is implied in renouncing God. He makes the greatest moral sacrifice to obtain partial satisfaction to his intellect: a believer ensures the greatest moral perfection, with partial satisfaction to his intellect also. Entire satisfaction to intellect is and can be attained by neither.”¹

It must be observed that Arnold understood by atheism not an inability to believe in the existence of God as a Person, but a deliberate refusal to believe in the moral law. This is a confusion for which the state of philosophy and criticism in England at that time furnishes ample excuse.

In the same strain he spoke with regard to belief in the resurrection:—

“If a man would rather have no prospect beyond the grave—if he cares not for being left *in* his sins, so long as he is not obliged to renounce them—if he only wishes to be assured that by seeking his life in this world he shall not lose it eternally, he has gained nothing, unless he can disprove the fact that Christ died and rose again from the dead. . . . For unbelief can never be innocent, unless it were inevitable; every difficulty in the Scriptures may be an excuse for it, if we are seeking for excuses; but he who loves God and virtue will cling to them, not till he can find

¹ Life, vol. i. p. 321-2.

an excuse for quitting them, but till he finds it impossible to abide with them.”¹

The—to some—inevitable unbelief in historical Christianity had not at this time made itself much felt in England. Greg’s “Creed of Christendom” was not published till after the death of Arnold, and the German school of criticism had not made much way.

Arnold had very little confidence in deathbed repentances; at such a time, he said,

“we may be frightened, confused, overpowered with a multitude of various feelings, but we are not enough masters of ourselves to gain then a true hatred of sin, or to be able to form deliberate resolutions of turning to God, in sincerity and earnestness. Our prayers are the mere prayers of fear, and are therefore of no value, as the time is past when fear might have been the beginning of wisdom.”²

There are many passages in his sermons urging his congregations to be “doers of the Word, and not hearers only;” to visit the poor and the sick; to console and relieve; to stoop, even as their Master stooped, to the humblest services in the cause of humanity. He said, emphatically:—

“We shall be judged for our actions: ‘They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation.’ And here it is well worth our notice that our Lord, in His description of the Day of Judgment, passes over all mention of our evil thoughts and of our evil words; nay, He does not so much as name what we have done of

¹ Sermons, vol. ii. p. 303.

² Ibid., vol. i. p. 89.

evil ; but all those whom He describes as turned into hell are condemned for not having done good.”¹

Or, again, he said :—

“There is a story told that in times and countries where there prevailed the deepest ignorance, some who came to be baptized into the faith of Christ, converted from their heathen state not in reality but only in name, were accustomed to leave their right arm unbaptized, with the notion that this arm, not being pledged to Christ’s service, might wreak upon their enemies those works of hatred and revenge which in Baptism they had promised to renounce. Is it too much to say that something like this unbaptized right arm is still to be met amongst us,—that men too often leave some of their very most important concerns, what they call, by way of eminence, their business—the management of their own money affairs and their conduct in public matters—wholly out of the control of Christ’s law ?”²

Arnold was no believer in verbal inspiration. In his theories of the interpretation of Scripture and of prophecy he is considerably in advance of his time. His definition of inspiration might have been equally applied to Homer and Shakespeare as to Isaiah and Matthew :—

“Inspiration does not raise a man above his own time, nor make him even in respect to that which he utters when inspired, perfect in goodness and wisdom ; but it so overrules his language that it shall contain a meaning more than his own mind was conscious of, and thus gives to it a character of divinity and a power of perpetual application.”³

His rules for the interpretation of Scripture were : first, to take into account the state and condition of him to

¹ Sermons on the Christian Life, p. 134.

² Sermons, vol. iv. p. 304.

³ Sermons on the Interpretation of Scripture, pp. 105-6.

whom a Divine command was originally given, and from this, by parity of reasoning, to gather how, under other circumstances, that command would be given. Thus "their indirect use may be universal, even although their direct use be limited."¹ Secondly, he held that "the revelations of God to man were gradual, and adapted to his state at the several periods when they were successively made."²

His whole faith in the Christian religion depended on the truth of the miracle of the Resurrection. Granting this, and also the general character of the Old Testament and "the undisputed historical facts relating to the Jewish nation," he argued "that the Jewish dispensation was of Divine origin;"³ and that "objections urged against particular miracles, on the ground of some alleged improbability in the narrative of them, are of a nature, for the most part, not to invalidate the *truth of revelation*, but merely the *inspiration of the historical record of it*. It is only the inspiration of the books of Scripture," he went on, "and not their general truth, and far less the truth of the revelations recorded in them, that is, or can be, affected by the great majority of objections, critical, historical, scientific, and chronological, which have been brought at different times against various parts of the Bible."⁴ "The *credibility* of these [historical] books does in no way depend upon their *inspiration*, unless we maintain that the testimony of all uninspired narratives may be rejected without blamable scepticism."⁵

¹ Essay on the Right Interpretation of Scripture; Sermons, vol. ii. p. 283.

² Ibid., p. 285.

³ Ibid., p. 306.

⁴ Ibid., p. 309.

⁵ Ibid., p. 310.

He thus concluded his essay :—

“My object in the foregoing pages has been to distinguish carefully between that Christian faith which is the guide and comfort of our lives, and a variety of questions, historical, critical, scientific, &c., connected with parts of that volume from which the grounds of our faith are derived. With Christian faith there must be no tampering; . . . we dare not describe the method of salvation different from what God has appointed; we dare not content ourselves with any lower standard of holiness than God’s perfect law. We must, indeed, render unto God the things that are God’s; but we must also render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,—that intellectual wisdom which exercises over this world more than imperial dominion may not be denied her lawful tribute. It is within her province to judge of all questions of science, of history, and of criticism according to her own general laws; nor may her decisions on these matters be disputed by an appeal to the higher power of spiritual wisdom, who leaves such points wholly to her lower jurisdiction.”¹

His theory of prophecy was not that “it is an anticipation of history” as to “particular nations, times, places, actions, even persons,” but that it anticipates history “in another and far higher sense.”² “Prophecy fixes our attention on principles, on good and evil, on truth and falsehood, on God and His enemy.”³ “Prophecy is busy with general principles; and inasmuch as particular nations, persons, and events represent these principles up to a certain point, so far it is concerned also with them.”⁴ The general object and character of prophecy, he held, was to assure man, amidst the existing evils of the world,

¹ Essay on the Right Interpretation of Scripture; Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 314–15.

² Sermons, vol. vii. p. 335.

³ Ibid., pp. 335–6.

⁴ Ibid., p. 336.

that the cause of good would be finally and entirely triumphant.

Arnold was the first English divine who recognised that the Christian religion must stand on its own merits, in that it may rather corroborate miracles than be corroborated by them. It may seem to us strange that the disciple of Niebuhr and the friend of Bunsen should have accepted so much of Scripture history as literally true: that he should have gravely discussed whether Adam in eating the forbidden fruit incurred eternal punishment, or whether the word death as applied to him merely meant ceasing to exist; whether the fourth commandment had been given to Adam and the patriarchs and was repeated by Moses, or was given for the first time on Mount Sinai; and that he should have offered the raising of Lazarus as a proof of the resurrection of all mankind. But we must not expect any one to be very far beyond his age. To have had a sufficiently strong perception of the invariableness of the laws of morality to condemn "the acts of many of those recorded in the Old Testament" was perhaps as great an advance as could be expected. He strove to extract a lesson from these very barbarities. "Right and needful is it," he said, "that we should imitate their fearless and earnest zeal, without which we, in our knowledge, are without excuse, with which they, by reason of their unavoidable ignorance, were ever in evil deeds blessed."¹

Similarly, in preaching on the wars of the Israelites, on Phineas, on Jael, on the Psalms, &c., he showed how these all emphasise a Divine hatred of evil and sin, and

¹ Sermons on the Interpretation of Scripture, p. 57.

inculcate on us a noble zeal for purity and righteousness. With regard to the Sabbath he said :—

“ We are bound by the spirit of the fourth commandment, because we are not fit to do without it. God commanded His people, in the old times, to keep holy the Sabbath-day. He commanded them this when they were very ignorant and very worldly-minded ; when, had He told them to worship Him every day in the spirit, they would have spent every day without worshipping Him at all ; their hearts were too hard for a devotion so pure. Now, God having given this command to His people, it is manifest that, so long as they are in the same state as when He gave it them, they are bound to keep it. . . . It was intended that the Gospel should put us in a very different state, so that we should need the command no more. . . . St. Paul hoped fully that it would be so. . . . But St. Paul’s hopes were disappointed, the gracious designs of God thwarted.”¹

That he foresaw much of the future of Biblical criticism, and yet felt no fear, is seen in the following passage from a letter on Coleridge’s “ Letters on Inspiration :—“ They are well fitted to break the ground in the approaches to that momentous question which involves in it so great a shock to existing notions ; the greatest, probably, that has ever been given since the discovery of the falsehood of the doctrine of the Pope’s infallibility. Yet it must come, and will end, in spite of the fears and clamours of the weak and bigoted, in the higher exalting and more sure establishing of Christian truths.”²

By far the greatest work of Arnold’s whole life was the furtherance of Church Reform. He thought the Church

¹ Sermons on the Interpretation of Scripture (edition 1845), pp. 286-8.

² *Life*, vol. i. p. 403.

required mending "more in government and discipline than in doctrine."

"The Church of Christ," he said, "is indeed far beyond all human ties; but, of all human ties, that to our country is the highest and most sacred; and England, to a true Englishman, ought to be dearer than the peculiar form of the *Church of England*."¹ At the same time, he was very far from being indifferent about the Church. "The vexation to me," he wrote, "is, that, while I hold very high Church doctrines, I am considered as one who dislikes the Church, whereas my whole hope for the advancement and triumph of the Gospel looks to it only through the restoration of the Church."²

Recognising the importance to the nation of a State-supported Church, which should minister to the spiritual, moral, and temporal wants of the people even in the most needy and isolated districts, he attributed the indifference of those "men who, though not religious, are yet admirers of much that is noble and much that is excellent," and of those "who really fear God and love Christianity" but are "found to doubt the wisdom of a national provision for the moral and intellectual improvement of the people," to the influence of "the worst reproach of the Christian name—the spirit of sectarianism. For, Christians having become divided into a thousand sects, and refusing to join in each other's worship, a national establishment is regarded as an unjust preference of one sect over another; and as it is considered impossible to establish all, and unfair to establish any one rather than another, there remains no alternative than to establish none; and, to

¹ Life, vol. ii. p. 243.

Ibid.

use a phrase much in fashion, to look upon every man's religion as an affair between God and his own conscience only."¹

He went on to show how essential to the peace and harmony of the nation, and to the general well-being of all classes, especially of the poor, is elasticity in opinion and in ceremony. He showed, too, how inevitable in the Christian religion are differences on "metaphysical, moral, and political points."²

"Doubtless it were a far happier state of things if men did not differ from each other at all;—but this may be wished for only; it is a serious folly to expect it. For so, while grieving over an inevitable evil, we heap on it aggravations of our own making, which are far worse than the original mischief. Differences of opinion will exist, but it is our fault that they have been considered equivalent to differences of principle and made a reason for separation and hostility."³

He then pointed out how inconsistent with the Protestant disclaimer of infallibility it is to erect a uniform standard of opinion on all points; how further inconsistent with the Church of England principle that "rites and ceremonies, being things indifferent in themselves, might be altered according to the difference of times and countries, and that the regulation of such matters was left wholly to the National Church," was the enforcement of a ritual upon "the whole country, in direct opposition to the feelings of many of its members;" and that the Act of Toleration was a strange measure, "by which the nation sanctioned the non-observance of its

¹ Church Reform, p. 269.

² Ibid., p. 271.

³ Ibid., p. 272.

institutions, and relaxed by one-half the bond of national communion.”¹ . . . “Men overrated,” he said, “the evil of difference of opinions, and underrated that of difference of practice, and their efforts were thus diverted from a cause in which all good men would have striven together, to one where goodness and wickedness were made accidental adjuncts, equally found on one side or on the other. . . . There is a choice between entire agreement with a very few, or general agreement with many, or agreement in some particular points with all; but,” he added, “entire agreement with many or general agreement with all are things impossible.”²

As so many were agreed on the main points of what he took to be the Christian creed, viz.: “That there is one God, Creator and Governor, who loves goodness and abhors wickedness; Jesus Christ, His Son, came into the world for our salvation; died and rose again to prove that His true servants shall not die eternally; that the volume of the Old and New Testaments contains the sole revelation of God’s will to man; that it is the standard of faith and rule of practice, and that we all acknowledge its authority, although we may often understand its meaning differently; and that we all, with very few exceptions, hold the same notions of righteousness,” &c. Arnold expressed the hope that, by the help of certain alterations in her terms of communion and modifications in her practice and ceremonies, the whole English people—except Roman Catholics, Quakers, and Unitarians—might unite in the one National Church. The epithet “National,”

¹ Church Reform, p. 276.

² Ibid., p. 286.

he thought, excluded the two former, while the epithet "Christian" excluded the latter.¹

He was not, however, without hope of reconciling the moderate members of even the Unitarian party. Though he thought addressing Christ, in the language of prayer and praise, to be an essential part of Christian worship, he urged that "if an Arian will join in our worship of Christ, and will call Him Lord and God, there is neither wisdom nor charity in insisting that he shall explain what he means by these terms."²

This sentiment he further enlarged on in the postscript to a later edition, as follows:—

"That is to us a fundamental error which directly interferes with our own edification. That is to say, we cannot worship with a man who insists upon our omitting some religious exercise which we feel to be important to our own improvement. I laid the stress, therefore, on the *worship* of Christ, not on the admission of His proper Divinity. If a man will not let me pray or praise my Saviour, he destroys the exercise of my faith altogether; but I am no way injured by his praying to Him as a glorified man, while I pray to Him as God."³

He wished to have the Litany of the Church of England used once every Sunday and great Christian holiday throughout the land and throughout the year—but both at other times on Sunday and on other days of the week to have varieties of services, according to the tastes of the community, held in the buildings of the National Church.⁴

¹ Church Reform, pp. 280–1. Jews he excluded, not only as non-Christians, but also as aliens. He was opposed to the "Jewish Disabilities Relief Bill" for this reason. "England is the land of Englishmen," he said, "not of Jews" (Life, vol. ii. p. 28).

² Church Reform, p. 285.

³ Ibid., p. 325.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 304, &c.

Upon the question to whom the necessary remodelling of the Articles, &c., should be entrusted, Arnold ventured only to express an earnest hope, that if ever an union with Dissenters be attempted, and it should thus become necessary to alter our present terms of communion, "the determining on the alterations to be made should never be committed to a Convocation, or to any commission consisting of clergymen alone."¹

Arnold was always very insistent upon the fact that the laity are quite as essential a part of the Church of England as the clergy. "When I hear men talk of 'the Church,'" he used to say, "I cannot help recalling how Abbé Siéyès replied to the question, 'What is the *Tiers Etat*?' by saying, '*La nation moins la noblesse et le clergé*;' and so I, if I were asked 'What are the laity?' would answer, 'The Church minus the clergy.'"²

He said, also, in his pamphlet on Church Reform, that "the most essential step towards effecting [any] improvements in the Church consists in giving to the laity a greater share in its ordinary government."³

"It is a most groundless superstition," he said, "and one which has occasioned and has been increased by the mischievous confusion of the Christian ministry with a *priesthood*, that anything can be lawful for a Christian layman which is unlawful for a Christian minister. As the ministers are in a manner picked out from the whole Christian body, it may be within possibility to exact from them a higher standard of practice than can be enforced generally; but this is no more than saying, 'What all *ought to be*, we will take care that *some*, at least, *shall be*.' If any one looks at the qualities

¹ Church Reformation, p. 314.

² Life, vol. i. p. 226.

³ Church Reform, p. 291.

required by St. Paul in the ministers of the Church (1 Tim. iv. 1-10; Tit. i. 6-9), he will find amongst them no esoteric purity of life or fulness of knowledge, but the virtues of a good man, a good public officer, and a good Christian—the virtues which become, and are expected of, every one invested with authority in the Church of God, whether his peculiar ministry be on the seat of justice, or at the altar, or in the general government of the whole society.”¹

And elsewhere he desired the restoration of the ancient custom of Church discipline, if, and only if, the Church be governed by the clergy *with* the laity.

The “Fragment on the Church” published after his death contains a most striking passage on the temporary use of forms as distinguished from the eternal value of the principles of religion.

“There have been,” he said, “three stages through which Christianity has passed, and which exhibit what may be called the law of decay in all institutions. . . . The first or perfect state exhibits the spirit of the institutions not absolutely without all forms, for that is impossible, but regarding them as things wholly subordinate, indifferent in themselves, and therefore deriving their value from particular times and circumstances. . . . Then comes the second stage, when from particular circumstances the existence of the spirit of the institution depends on the adherence to particular outward regulations. The men of this generation insist, as well they may, on the necessity of these forms, for without them the spirit would be lost. . . . Around and for these forms is the stress of battle; but their defenders well know that they are but the husk in which the seed of life is sheltered. . . . Then the storm passes away, and the precious seed, safely sheltered within its husk, has escaped destruction. The forms have done their appointed work, and, like the best of mortal in-

¹ Church Reform, p. 302.

struments, their end should be that, after having served their own generation by the will of God, they should fall asleep and see corruption. But in the third stage men cannot understand this law. Their fathers clung to certain forms to the death; they said—and said truly—that unless these were preserved the spirit would perish. The sons repeat their fathers' words, although in their mouths they have become a lie. . . . Age after age the same language is repeated, whilst age after age its falsehood is becoming more flagrant; and still it is said, 'We are treading in the steps of our fathers from the very beginning; even at the very first these forms were held to be essential'! So, when the husk cracks, and would fain fall to pieces by the natural swelling of the seed within, foolish zeal labours to hold them together, . . . because men regard the form and not the substance; because they think that to echo the language of their forefathers is to be faithful imitators of their spirit; because they are blind to the lesson which all nature teaches them, and would for ever keep the egg-shell unbroken and the sheaf of the leaf unburst, not seeing that the wisdom of winter is the folly of spring."¹

Arnold opposed the Tractarians for their priestliness, for their doctrine of Apostolic Succession, and for their general illiberality, more especially in the case of Dr. Hampden. At the same time he was looked upon as a bigot among the men of letters and philosophy of London for insisting upon a Scripture examination as being part of the requirements for the B.A. degree at the New University. He held that "moral education cannot be separated from religious."²

His theory of clerical education was, as may be supposed, most liberal. He would have candidates for orders know "the great vicissitudes of opinion, the great influences upon morals, the great social changes, which

¹ Church Reform, pp. 116-21.

² Life, vol. ii. Chap. viii.

have been affected by or have affected both." He would have them know the "human mind and character," instructed in political economy and ecclesiastical history, and especially be acquainted with "the master-minds of all ages." He had the courage to assert that the Christian minister "will find, in the comparison of human works, both spiritually and intellectually, the works of the greatest minds will be the most useful to him; that he may be well content to be ignorant even of Bull and Pearson if he is thus enabled to become more intimately familiar with Bacon and Aristotle."¹

He had no serious difficulties himself with any of the Articles, but disliked them "because they represent truth untruly, that is, in an unedifying manner, and thus robbed of its living truth, whilst it retains its more literal form; whereas the same truth embodied in prayers, or confessions, or even in catechisms, becomes more Christian just in proportion as it is less theological."² He signed the petition of 1840 praying for their relaxation, more because he hated to hang back from any liberal movement than that he found them irksome himself or thought them likely to be really harmful to others. Though he opposed the Tractarians in many respects, he sympathised with them cordially in some: such as in wishing for daily services, for more frequent administrations of the Communion, for constant reminders of sacred things by crucifixes, pictures, and wayside chapels. Moreover, he declared that if ever the High Church party should be persecuted in Oxford

¹ Sermons, vol. iii., Introd., p. xvi.

² Life, vol. i. p. 361.

in its turn, as it had persecuted Hampden, he would vote in Convocation on its behalf. Unfortunately, he was dead ere the days of oppression for the Puseyites, and consequently could not join the noble liberals who, forgiving the past, protected the new down-trodden minority.

Arnold's influence upon all the public schools of England indirectly, and upon that of Rugby directly, is now universally acknowledged. Even during his life those who differed most from him in theology and politics were compelled to agree with his real admirers in testifying to the greatness of his moral influence. To the high tone of his late pupils at college such very different men as Ward and Moberley have borne witness. Speaking of A. H. Clough, the one said: "This latter principle—the duty of making a stand in society for good principles—was one essential characteristic of Dr. Arnold's pupils."¹ While the other wrote of him, "It soon became a matter of observation to us in the University that his pupils brought quite a different character with them to Oxford than we had known elsewhere. I do not speak of opinions; but his pupils were thoughtful, manly-minded, conscientious of duty and obligation, when they first came to college. We . . . looked on Arnold as exercising an influence for good, which (for how many years I know not) had been absolutely unknown to our public schools."²

The fashion of making bishops of head-masters was not at that time prevalent. Perhaps it is a posthumous recognition of the deserts of Arnold that has led to the frequent appointment of the heads of public schools to vacant sees; or perhaps it is due to the improvement in public

¹ Life of A. H. Clough.

² Life and Letters, vol. i. p. 191.

schools, inaugurated by Arnold, that has made these such excellent training colleges for the episcopate. Be this as it may, Arnold was never made a bishop, nor, indeed, given any reward in the Church he loved so well, and therefore criticised so bravely. In the last year of his life he was given the Regius Professorship of Modern History at Oxford, and that was all. He deeply regretted his inability to serve his country and his Church as much as he felt himself able. "At least I can say this," he wrote, as he realised the hopelessness of looking for preferment, "that I should only have valued a bishopric as giving me some prospect of effecting that Church reform which I so earnestly long for—the commencement of a union with all Christians, and of a true *Church* government as distinguished from a *clergy* government, or from none at all." He repeatedly applied to himself the words of Herodotus, "The bitterest grief is to know much and to accomplish nothing."

People tried during his life, and they have tried since his death, to determine to which of the two schools of theology in England Arnold was most inclined. It is impossible to pigeon-hole him, for he was essentially a clergymen of the Church of England, and that means one of no party, a pronouncer of no shibboleth, a wearer of no badge—in a word, a Broad Churchman.

CHAPTER VI.

*J. C. HARE—W. WHEWELL—H. ALFORD—
C. THIRLWALL.*

ARCHDEACON J. C. HARE (1795-1855) must be reckoned one of the most prominent members of the Broad Church party of his day. Indeed his example and teaching show how incompatible are the terms "Broad Church" and "party;" for he remained perfectly independent of both the High and the Low schools of thought, sympathising or differing with either as they seemed to him to follow after or depart from the standard of Christian charity. He took no prominent part in reforms, whether doctrinal or political, and consequently escaped much of the odium that befell more active men,—such as Arnold, Maurice, the Essayists, and Colenso. He was a good German scholar, translating—in conjunction with Thirlwall—Niebuhr's History of Rome. His sermons and charges show a liberal, candid, and tolerant spirit. They are long and ill-constructed, though often relieved by beautiful turns of expression, happy metaphors and analogies. He was orthodox on the main doctrines, but always advocated as much liberty of opinion as he thought compatible with Christian unity. His Church views were moderate Erastian. He was anxious to retain the lay element in the Court of Arches, "since clergymen,

on doctrinal questions will mostly have a bias swaying them more or less strongly on one side or the other ; they would be apt to fancy that their business was to determine the doctrine of the Church, what it ought to be, instead of being content to interpret and apply it to the case before them.”¹

Speaking of the parties that divide the English Church, he said :—

“With both sides I feel that I have many bonds of common faith and love and duty ; with both of them I heartily desire to work together in the service of our common Master. With each of the two parties, on sundry points, I differ in opinion more or less widely ; but why should this cut me off from them, why should it cut them off from me ? May we not hold fast to that whereon we are agreed, and join hand to to hand and heart to heart on that sure unshakable ground which cannot slip from under us, and wait until God shall reveal to us what we now see dimly and darkly ?”²

His ideal of a Church was “to be comprehensive, throwing open its gates freely to all forms of true Christian thought and life ; but it ought not to be compromising or temporising, or indifferent or lukewarm, a *juste milieu* between hot and cold ; for of such a Church the Lord declares that He will spew it out of His mouth.”³

“It was not by stickling each for his own separate opinions that the Apostlic Council at Jerusalem pacified the first controversies in the Church, and prepared themselves for their mighty work of bringing the world to Christianity, but by giving each the right hand of fellowship and by adhering to

¹ The True Remedy for the Evils of the Age, p. 106.

² Ibid., p. 95.

³ Ibid., Dedication, p. v.

that which was morally essential, while diversity and freedom in lesser things were fully allowed. In fact, by refraining from supporting institutions established for a godly purpose, because they are supported by members of an opposition party, we do all we can to give them the very bias we complain of ; whereas, if we took part in them heartily we should correct that bias. . . . Nor does harmony arise from the incessant repetition of a single note, but from the union of divers notes.

"I have spoken thus strongly on this point, though I have often spoken on it before, because it is by these miserable and hateful doctrines that God's work upon earth . . . has been hindered age after age. Through them the Church has been rent in pieces, and has become an object of reproach and scorn to the unbeliever and the heathen."¹

Again, more tersely, he said :—

"They, however, who want the whole world to walk in one way are sure to mean at bottom that this way shall be their own."²

Once more, on Church government, he spoke thus :—

" . . . If it be the duty of individual Christians to submit to the authority of the Church, for the sake of edification, both their own and that of their brethren, it becomes a correlative duty in those who legislate for the Church, and who exercise authority over it, not to press on its inferior members, not to burden their consciences with that which is unnecessary—to deal tenderly with them, as loving parents deal with their children ; yea, as the Lord Himself dealt with His disciples."³

¹ True Remedy for the Evils of the Age, pp. 50-1.

² Dedicatory Epistle of The Unity of the Church, Charge 1843, p. 219.

³ Ibid., pp. 236-7.

The following are some of his happiest metaphors and analogies:—

“Even if we wanted a crutch to lean on, we should not strengthen our footing by using our crutch as a club to strike with.”¹

“Instead of sailing out as we might do under the guidance of the heavens, with one consent, from all parts of the earth on the same grand voyage of discovery after truth, we are broken up and scattered hither and thither, with no other help to steer through the darkness than the reflection of our own stern-lights in the waters.”²

“Shall the oak say to the elm, ‘*Depart from me ; thou hast no place in God’s forest ; thou shalt not breathe His air or drink His sunshine ;*’ or shall the oak say to the birch, ‘*Avaunt ! thou art unworthy to stand by my side ; cut thyself down and crawl away and hide thyself in some outlandish thicket*’ ? Oh, my brethren ! the spring is just about to clothe all the trees of the forest in their bright, fresh leaves, which will shine and sparkle rejoicingly and thankfully in the sun and rain. Shall it not also clothe our hearts anew in bright, hopeful garments of faith and love, diverse in form, in hue, in texture, but blending together into a beautiful, harmonious unity beneath the light of the Sun of Righteousness ?”³

Though Archdeacon Hare was thoroughly orthodox on the main doctrines, he was no believer in verbal inspiration.

“Surely we might learn,” he said, “this lesson at least from the discrepancies in the Gospels, that differences of the letter are immaterial when the spirit is one. Even in the two records of the Lord’s Prayer, brief as it is, there are

¹ Dedicatory Epistle of The Unity of the Church, Charge 1843, p. 268.

² Ibid., p. 270.

³ True Remedy for the Evils of the Age, pp. 95-6

diversities; for the Spirit of God is more careful to guide the thoughts of the heart than the words of our lips.”¹

WILLIAM WHEWELL (1795–1866), Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, influenced theology rather indirectly than directly. By his sympathy with science he did somewhat towards encouraging the spirit of rationalism; by his moral and temperate, though orthodox, sermons, and by the general liberality of his tone, he did a good deal for the cause of true religion. He attacked no dogmas and he instituted no Church reforms. He set an example, however, of a fearless devotion to truth, and made no feeble efforts to reconcile science with orthodox theology.

In the extracts from his “History of the Inductive Sciences,” which he published in 1845 under the title of “Indications of the Creator,” as a fresh contribution to Natural Theology, he apparently deprecated the use of reason as a “judge of the truth of revealed doctrines,” and concluded that “it is reasonably held, that the phrases which are employed in Scripture respecting astronomical facts are not to be made use of to guide our scientific opinions; they may be supposed to answer their end if they fall in with common notions, and are thus effectually subservient to the moral and religious import of revelation.”²

He went on to observe that,

“the meaning which any generation puts upon the phrases of Scripture depends, more than is at first sight supposed,

¹ Dedicatory Epistle of Charge 1843 on the Unity of the Church, p. 257.

² Indications of the Creator, pp. 5–6.

upon the received philosophy of the time. Hence, while men imagine that they are contending for revelation, they are, in fact, contending for their own interpretation of revelation, unconsciously adapted to what they believe to be rationally probable. . . . When the language of Scripture, invested with its new meaning, has become familiar to men, it is found that the ideas which it calls up are quite as reconcilable as the former ones with the soundest religious views. And the world then looks back with surprise at the error of those who thought that the essence of revelation was involved in their own arbitrary version of some collateral circumstance.”¹

He next pointed out the weakness and vanity of “the attempt to get rid of the difficulty by merely denouncing the new tenets as inconsistent with religious belief, and by visiting the promulgators of them with severity such as the state of opinions and institutions may allow.”²

Sentiments such as these, showing clear common-sense and candour, must have had a healthy influence upon the rising generation.

Though Whewell took no part in ecclesiastical reforms, he expressed admiration for F. D. Maurice, and was on the side of liberality in the Gorham struggle. The “Origin of Species” had been out seven years before his death, but he does not appear to have taken any public, or even private, notice of this revolutionary work.

HENRY ALFORD (1810-1871), Dean of Canterbury, was very far from being a rationalist. He attached considerable importance to doctrines, and showed no approbation, but rather disapprobation, of the Essayists and Colenso.

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He was candid and truth-seeking, however. For instance, he said, though he "could not adopt" and had "an increasing aversion to the rationalistic systems of both" De Wette and Meyer, he highly commended "the almost total absence from their pages of any wish to bend plain language so as to suit preconceived notions, because they simply inquire throughout," not "What *may* it mean?" but "What *does* it mean?"¹

He was always liberal in his tone both towards the High and the Low Church parties, and earnestly inculcated the love of truth before orthodoxy, both by precept and example. He dwelt constantly on the practical nature of Christianity, and deprecated too exclusive attention to questions of doctrine and theory. He disliked party-preaching and intolerance and the adopting of peculiarities and special phraseologies by the various sections of the Church.

"This will not be remedied," he said, in an address to the Church Congress of 1865, "until we learn to recognise in our teaching more of the history of the great currents of religious thought, and also learn to know one another and trust one another far more than we do; until we cease to make the mere catchwords of party the staple of our discourse, and deal with truth as largely as the Bible deals with it, and as the heart of man apprehends it.

"The two great parties will still retain their bias. . . . One will lay hold on the Person of our glorified Head by direct acts of faith, another by the Sacraments and their appointed ministers; and each, in doing so, will be in his proper work provided he give due place for the view of the other, and take

¹ Essays and Addresses, pp. 144-5.

into account not one side only, but the whole of that truth which is made up of both views together.”¹

He was eager to have all Christians recognised as members of the Holy Catholic Church, the true test being “that propounded by our Master, ‘By their *fruits* (not by their hierarchies) shall ye know them.’”²

“This rule,” he said in a sermon on “Charity the End of the Commandment,” “we cast behind us. We proclaim that this is a deceptive rule, a lax and latitudinarian standard, and we take on us to amend it: ‘By their professions ye shall know them, by their opinions ye shall know them, by their words ye shall know them.’ And so the great men in our Christian world are not the men of eminent Christian action, not the peacemakers, not the heroes of love and self-denial, but the vehement denouncers of differing opinion, the strong asserters of mere narrow and well-marked line of doctrine in doubtful matters, the very persons who cause instead of healing division.

“If the end of the commandment is love, we of this Church, my brethren, have somehow missed the path, and are going altogether astray from it.”³

It is doubtful whether Alford included Romanists in his Holy Catholic Church. In a private letter from the Eternal City he spoke of Sancta Maria Maggiore being “full of people and spectators; for there is but one congregation in Rome, and that is outside the Porta de Popolo,”⁴ *i.e.*, the English Church. The undeniable liberality of his tone did not, perhaps, extend beyond Protestant Dissenters. Towards these he wished to have as

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² *Union of Christendom*, p. 86.

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⁴ *Life*, p. 372.

much freedom granted as to the various shades of opinion in the National Church :—

“What latitude of doctrine are we allowing, at this moment, within the English Church herself? . . . That liberty which, in spite of articles and canons and ecclesiastical courts, we permit to Churchmen we can hardly, in fairness, deny to Dissenters. And, if I am not mistaken, anything like a fair reply to this inquiry must be such as to cause any honest man to drop the stone which he had lifted to throw at the Unitarians.

“The fact seems to be this, that you cannot bound Christianity by a doctrinal test. You may bound certain Churches, you may limit certain sects, by such a test. . . . We want for Christendom a fact, not a doctrine, as the test of inclusion. Christendom is as wide as the Christian name; as wide as the recognition of Christ as Master. Let each portion of it, as conscience dictates, defend truth and protest against error; but no portion of it has a right to exclude or to unchurch another.”¹

It does not appear to have occurred to Alford that the English Church need not be any narrower than the Christian name; and that Christianity may require of its members neither a defence of truth nor a protestation against error. His scheme of Church policy was in accordance with his liberal but somewhat sectarian views. He wished, in order that the union of all Christians should be better recognised, that all denominations might meet at “the highest Christian ordinance,” which was to be administered without the liturgical form of any one body, “the only words heard being the Scriptural narrative of its institution, the bread and wine being administered in silence.” He

¹ On the Union of Christendom : Essays and Addresses, pp. 100-1.

further advocated the occasional interchange of pulpits among Christian bodies. This was "never to become customary," he added, nor "to extend beyond exhortation from the pulpit," preachers being licensed *pro hac vice*, and to undertake "to respect the differences between the Churches." From this scheme he excepted Unitarians, on the ground of "incompatibility of doctrine."¹

Holding these views, and being at the same time an eminently just man, he was in favour of Disestablishment. He regarded this as inevitable and the right outcome of the Reformation, according to the sixth Article. The laws against the Dissenters he considered sad departures from, and the Acts of Toleration, &c., honest efforts to return to, the original ideal.

"Christianity is not matter for human law, but for the free spirit of man. . . . The Christianity of our nation is then proved when her constituent elements act together on the verdict of the Christian conscience; when she professes, by her Legislature, acts of plain duty but questionable expediency, such as the liberation of the slaves in her West Indian possessions; when she succours the oppressed without gain for herself, as in the recent expedition to Abyssinia. One such act stamps her Christian before God and man, more than all the fictitious survivals of her play-professions of Anglicanism."²

He was severe in his strictures upon the clergy and the system, or rather absence of system, of selection for the ministry in the English Church. He said it was "about as rational as it would be to take a house-surgeon for a hospital by lot among the bystanders, and the result is, that among us the pastoral office, as such, is almost in

¹ Essays and Addresses, pp. 104, &c.

² Ibid., pp. 170-I.

abeyance. The last thing that a thinking man will do in spiritual perplexity is to consult his clergyman. . . . There is," he said, "in the pulpit an almost universal railing at the age, and at its habits of thought and practice. . . . General sentences of condemnation are pronounced against whole schools of thought and opinion, without any pains bestowed to understand them, without any inquiry how far they may represent the influence of Christianity itself, working in unsuspected and hitherto unexampled forms."¹

Again :—

"It is impossible not to say something of the disadvantage at which those preach in our day who treat timidly or disingenuously the labours of criticism and science. Let there be fewer and fewer among us who are in those respects defending untenable positions merely by strong and despotic words ; fewer and fewer of such little faith as not to believe that researches in truth will at last be guided into truth ; fewer who know not that every truth, wheresoever or by whomsoever found, is a gain for God's cause and God's Word. Let our attitude be manly, open, fearless. Above all, let us never adopt nor approach the pious fraud in dealing with Scripture or with nature. . . . The position of the clergy of the Church of England in regard of Scripture criticism and of science is a high and solemn one ; let us not abdicate it, let us not disgrace it."²

Alford held pretty liberal views on the Sabbath question ; also on the Hampden controversy. He believed in the verbal inspiration of an original and lost version of

¹ On the Requisites of an Education for the Ministry : Essays and Addresses, pp. 146-8.

² On Preaching ; its Adaptation to the Present Time : Ibid., pp. 35-7.

the New Testament. He was quite sure that there would be no discrepancies in the four records of the life of Christ which we possess "if we could know exactly how any given event related in the Gospels happened." Not knowing this, he said, "our plain duty in making a right use of the Gospels is firmly and fearlessly to recognise these, and to leave them as fearlessly unsolved if no honest solution can be found."¹

CONNOP THIRLWALL (1797-1875), Bishop of Saint David's, besides translating Niebuhr's *History of Rome* with Archdeacon Hare, translated and wrote an Introduction to Schleiermacher's "Essay on Saint Luke." In his charges and speeches he showed himself to be a thorough statesman, a temperate theologian, and a great scholar.

He understood the position of the Church of England to be "a mean between two extremes," and expected that, "so long as human nature continues what it is, . . . some of her members should incline towards one extreme, others towards its opposite, though all sincerely and equally attached to her doctrine and fellowship. If we are not ashamed of this character of moderation which distinguishes her; if, on the contrary, we rejoice in it, and regard it as her most honourable attribute, as the very stamp of prudence and charity combined, and the safest criterion of truth, then we must be content to pay the price of this high privilege, in that continual contrast of opinions and that occasional collision of parties; though this view of the case ought undoubtedly to operate as a constant motive to mutual forbearance."²

With respect to the Gorham controversy and the violent

¹ *How to Study the New Testament*, Introduction, p. xi.

² *Literary Remains*, vol. i. pp. 27-8.

attempts alike to assist and to withstand Romanising tendencies in the English Church, he held that—

“It is not in this way that the truth must be put forth in its power if it is to make and keep us free ; not in word, but in deed ; not so much by making itself heard as seen and felt, and this chiefly in the quiet, regular work of the Church. . . . But all the fruits of the most active zeal will be lost, and it will only aggravate our difficulties and dangers, if it is not tempered with the spirit of brotherly charity. The hopes of our adversaries are grounded, not upon our indifference and supineness, but upon our unhappy intestine divisions ; upon our mutual jealousies, suspicions, and misunderstandings ; upon the prevalence of an unchristian party-spirit, which coins nicknames and watchwords for the purpose of exciting strife and ill-will, which distorts and perverts the most innocent expressions and actions, which magnifies difficulties and widens breaches, which blinds men of opposite sides to one another’s worth and neutralises their separate efforts for the common good. . . . The things wherewith one may edify another comprehend the whole circle of our Christian duties and the broad ground of our Church fellowship. The things which give occasion to discord are those which are most remotely, if at all, connected with any purposes of mutual edification. . . . It may well be doubted whether new party bonds, and unions which multiply divisions, are likely to help us toward keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”¹

The remedy he proposed to his clergy for the unhappy divisions and controversies of the time was, to fix their thought and attention more on the moral well-being of their people than on doctrinal controversies, to show—

“a double measure of quiet, steady activity, concentrated on the regular, ordinary, undisputed work of the Church. . . .

¹ Literary Remains, vol. i. pp. 189-91.

Without this, it would be but the expression of a vain and impotent longing to say, '*Who will show us any good?*' With this, there is no good which we may not reasonably hope to have added unto us; no evil—none, certainly, that man can do unto us—that we have need to fear. . . . Your churches, your schools, the dwellings of the poor, the chambers of the sick, the ignorant, the erring, the careless, the weak-hearted—these you have always with you. If these objects of your pastoral care should so engross both your time and thoughts as to leave you none to spare for taking part in these contentions with which others are almost wholly occupied, I am sure that you will not be the less useful—useful, I mean, not simply within the prescribed range of your ministerial labours, but, though it may be unconsciously and undesignedly, to the Church at large.”¹

Again, in 1857, he regretted that on every side he saw signs of a spirit “fraught with mischief and danger,” that is, “the growing prevalence of dogmatical intolerance.” “Things in themselves indifferent are made party-badges and shibboleths, to which one side clings the more tenaciously because they are vehemently disliked on the other.” “The contests to which they give rise,” he added, “waste the Church’s strength, shake the confidence and chill the affections of her most intelligent and attached members, and afford not only matter of exultation and triumph, but real advantage to her adversaries.”²

He held liberal views upon the marriage question of 1857; the admission of the Jews into Parliament; the disuse of the Athanasian Creed; and the Amendment of the Act of Uniformity of 1871. When urged to remove Dr. Rowland Williams from the Vice-Principalship of Lam-

¹ Literary Remains, vol. i. pp. 192-3.

² Ibid., pp. 252-3.

peter College, on account of his book, "Rational Godliness," the Bishop replied, first, that his power did not admit of such an act; and second, that he would not do it if he could, as he held it would be counter to "the respect due to the rights of individuals; rights which, when clear, I could not think it lawful to sacrifice to any object, however otherwise desirable." He held himself bound to resist the introduction of anything contrary to the teaching of the Church; while, on the other hand, he regarded it as a no less sacred and important part of his duty "to respect, and as far as in him lay to protect, that freedom of thought, word, and action which the Church has hitherto granted to her ministers and members, and neither to make nor sanction any attempt to place it under any new restriction which she has not thought fit to impose."¹

When, however, "Essays and Reviews" appeared in 1861, Thirlwall was somewhat shocked and alarmed. He apparently thought that laymen might have done this thing with average impunity, but not clergymen. He believed the views therein set forth to be contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England, and said, "After the principles laid down in this work have been carried to their logical result, that which is left will be something to which the name of Christianity cannot be applied without a straining and abuse of language. It will be no longer a religion, . . . because it will contain nothing which is not supposed to have been originally derived from the processes of unassisted human reason."²

With respect to the question of miracles he held a

¹ Vol. i. pp. 252-3.

² Vol. ii. p. 22-3.

somewhat confused opinion. He was ready to reject them all (with one exception) individually, but thought them too bound up with the Christian religion to reject them collectively.

"They are not, indeed," he said, "when considered each by itself, so intimately connected with its [Christianity's] fundamental truths; there is no one of them, except the Resurrection, so identified with any article of faith that if it had never been wrought, or had never been recorded, it would have made any difference to our creed. But it could only be through a strange thoughtlessness that any one could maintain that the Christian faith would be no way affected, though all should be rejected as matters of fact and received only as parables or myths. When the miraculous portions of the Gospel history are expunged there will remain only a meagre outline of our Lord's life, ending with His death. Discourses, indeed, attributed to Him will be left full of wisdom and holiness. But of the Speaker Himself, His character and work, it will be impossible from sources so utterly corrupt as, on this supposition, those to which alone we have access would be, to gain any distinct image."¹

Again, speaking of the discussions raised by Colenso's writings, he remarked:—

"Another thought which may well be brought home to our minds by the controversies of the day, is that we have greater need than ever to distinguish between things which do and things which do not concern our Christian faith and hope. A great part of the events related in the Old Testament has no more apparent connection with our religion than those of Grecian or Roman history. . . . The history, so far as it is a narrative of civil and political transactions, has no essential connection with any religious truth, and if it had been lost

¹ Vol. ii. p. 22.

. . . our treasure of Christian doctrine would have remained whole and unimpaired. The numbers, migrations, wars, battles, conquests, and reverses of Israel have nothing in common with the teaching of Christ, with the way of salvation, with the fruits of the Spirit. . . . Such questions belong to every one's private judgment and feeling, which have the fullest right to decide for each, but not to impose their decisions as the dictate of an infallible authority on the consciences of others. Any attempt to erect such facts into articles of faith would be fraught with danger of irreparable evil to the Church, as well as with immediate hurt to numberless souls." ¹

In his Introduction to Schleiermacher's "Essay on Saint Luke" he admitted that "the more rigid theory of inspiration was abandoned by the learned on account of the insuperable difficulties opposed to it by the discrepancies found in the Gospels;" and added, "So these same discrepancies compel us to admit that the superintending control of the Spirit was not exerted to exempt the sacred writers altogether from errors and inadvertencies." ²

Bishop Thirlwall was mainly instrumental in preventing the Upper House of Convocation from accepting the propositions condemnatory of Dr. Colenso's book submitted to it by the Lower House. He was quite willing that Unitarians, &c., should co-operate with Churchmen in revising the translation of the Scriptures as scholars, but he was scandalised at the admission of a Unitarian to the Communion on that occasion. Altogether, though undoubtedly a distinguished member, he can scarcely be reckoned as one of the pioneers or advanced guard of the Broad Church party.

¹ Literary Remains (Charges), vol. ii. pp. 83-4.

² P. 15.

The following is from a note by the Bishop in the *Contemporary Review* for October 1875 on an article by Dr. Littledale on "Church Parties," in which he had been reckoned among the most conspicuous members of the Broad Church school. It illustrates Thirlwall's attitude of mind, besides being an excellent account of what breadth really means:—

"I should be well content to accept this designation of myself under protest; to do so absolutely I must first know what it means.

"When I consider that the Church of Jesus Christ was a broad Church in comparison with the Jewish Church; that the Sermon on the Mount was distinguished by the breadth of its teaching from all that the disciples had before heard; that it was the ministry of a Church too broad even for some Christians of that day, for which St. Paul exchanged the most strait section of the religion in which he had been brought up:—remembering all this, I cannot bring myself to treat 'Broad Church' as a term of reproach.

"Let others interpret it as they will, to me it does not appear an appropriate description of any existing 'school,' party, or body held together by a common set of theological tenets. I understand it as signifying a certain stamp of individual character, which I should describe as a disposition to recognise and appreciate that which is true and good under all varieties of forms, and in persons separated from one another by the most conflicting opinions.

"... The proper antithesis to broad is not high or low, but narrow. It would be monstrous presumption, and utterly inconsistent with Broad Church principles according to my view, for any school or party to pretend to the monopoly of this title, as if there were no Broad Churchmen to be found out of its own little circle.

"I do not, however, mean to represent the note of Broad Churchmanship as consisting simply in a certain charitable

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"I do not, however, mean to represent the note of Broad Churchmanship as consisting simply in a certain charitable

and conciliatory disposition. No doubt it also implies a certain intellectual peculiarity which parts it alike from the High and the Low school. What this is I had rather illustrate by example than attempt exactly to define. I would name among those of past times Bishop Jeremy Taylor, and among those of my own generation Archdeacon Hare, as furnishing a sufficient illustration of my meaning. . . . Dr. Littledale thinks that the deficiencies of the Broad Church teaching are the effects of ignorance, which might be corrected by a deeper study of theology; and he asserts that 'theological study grows clearer with advancing knowledge.' If that means that as knowledge advances, more becomes known, all, I suppose, would bow to the oracle. But if it means that as theology becomes more definite and systematic, it carries deeper conviction of its truth to minds which have ever been used to discriminate between that which is human and that which is Divine in it, it would hardly be possible to frame a proposition running more directly counter to all the results of my study of ecclesiastical history, and to those of my personal experience.

"To hold a prominent place in such a brotherhood as answers to my conception of the Broad Church would to me appear a most enviable distinction. I can only lament that I can lay no claim whatever to such an honour."¹

¹ Literary Remains, vol. iii. pp. 481-3.

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY HART MILMAN.

1791-1868.

DEAN MILMAN is best described as an English gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian. He wrote many books, most of them of considerable length, characterised, if not by very deep learning, yet always by a courteous, dispassionate, truth-loving tone. He doubted none of the so-called Christian doctrines, he spoke always with implicit belief of the chief speculations of theology, but he never failed to show how worthless and misleading is doctrine apart from practice, or careflessness as to creed without at least equal regard to purity of conduct. He fearlessly uttered the truth as he believed it was given him, saying that "he was not able to tell one-third or one-quarter of a lie."¹

His sermon on "Hebrew Prophecy," preached at Oxford in 1865, Stanley spoke of as "the most complete summary of his theological principles."² It is indeed a noble discourse, as will be seen from the following extracts.

He began by showing that the prediction of future events was not the highest or most important part of the Hebrew prophet's mission.

¹ Article on Dean Milman in *Essays on Church and State*, by Dean Stanley, p. 576.

² *Ibid.*, p. 580.

"He was," he said, "far more than this to his own generation. He was the voice of God to admonish, to rebuke, to console, to teach; he was the authorised preacher of God's justice, of God's wisdom, of God's mercy. . . . The prophet was the great moral power, the remembrancer of God's perpetual presence. . . . Hebrew prophecy was thus a vast vaticination, not only in special texts, and, as it were, premature allusions to facts and circumstances in the evangelic history, but of the Gospel itself; a twilight, a dim twilight of Christian righteousness; a necessary opening in the great drama of the providential government of the world."¹

Among the Christian truths which he thus traced as foreshadowed in prophecy is that the worship of God must be spiritual:—

"Cereemonial observances are shrinking into their proper domain. The moral effects, the true tests of religion, are assuming their rightful supremacy. Already works of goodness and of charity are advancing into the first rank." He then quoted Isa. lviii. 5-7, and contrasted 2 Chron. vii. 4-6 with Micah vi. 6, 7; adding:—

"Is this a prophet of the Law, or a disciple of Him who uttered the Sermon on the Mount?—of Him who approved the assenting Scribe, when he acknowledged the love of God and the love of his neighbour to be more than whole burnt offerings and sacrifices?—who said of that learned Jew, that he was not far from the kingdom of God; his Jewish hardness of heart was fast melting away, he was ripe for the acceptance of the Gospel? In these words of Micah the purest Christian virtues seem springing to precocious life; the fruits of Christian righteousness are in the bud of promise; he scents afar off the incense of true Christian sacrifice—self-sacrifice, and self-sacrifice for the good of others."²

¹ Sermon on Hebrew Prophecy, pp. 5-6.

² Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Another principle of Christianity which he found in the utterances of the prophets was "that God's kingdom is not of this world." He spoke of the "innate Judaism" within us which makes us assume an "exclusive and disdainful religious superiority," and urged that "there is but one throne of God, of God in Christ, upon earth, the throne in the unseen heart of man."¹

Again, he said :—

"As to what, in the vulgar sense, is commonly termed morality, the Jews can hardly be arraigned with justice as pre-eminently depraved. . . . If, as we are authoritatively told, 'when Moses was read the veil was upon their hearts,' we may presume that in some sort they had degenerated from the milder spirit of their lawgiver. But when the Prophets were read the veil doubtless was more dense, and hid from them far brighter truths. . . . They had not advanced with the advancing spirit of their religion; they had not expanded with the expansion of their own faith. Had the Prophets been more submissively studied, more wisely interpreted, they would have been at least in some degree better prepared for that higher morality, that highest morality, revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, and in His Gospel and by His apostles. In that morality I include the conception of the parental character of God, the parental character to all mankind, the love of God as shown in the Redemption, the mild and gentle ideal of goodness in every word and act of the Redeemer, the brotherhood of all men as alike the offspring of God, the Sermon on the Mount, the charity as unfolded by St. Paul, the love as instilled into the heart by St. John."²

The union of "true religion and this highest morality" he likened to a "hallowed marriage sacrament." "Man,"

¹ Sermon on Hebrew Prophecy, pp. 17-18.

² Ibid., pp. 24-5.

he said, "is ever striving, man has ever striven, to set asunder what God has joined together."

"Survey the whole history of Christianity, and observe religion at almost every period giving a bill of divorce to his Heaven-appointed consort, and taking to his bosom some other companion, or, what has been more common, reducing the legitimate partner of his life to a humble and neglected handmaid.

"Ceremonial observance, monastic asceticism, sacerdotal power, orthodoxy of creed in various forms, have usurped the honours, engrossed the affections, which ought to have been the inalienable rights of the first love, the wedded bride, of young Christianity. Sometimes the intrusive stranger may seem to have enforced absolute repudiation, entire estrangement. Ceremonial observance has offered itself as the whole of religion. Have the Pharisees been the only religionists who paid their tithe of mint, anise and cummin, small ritualisms, timorous observances, rigid punctualities of worship, and neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, truth? . . .

"Orthodoxy of creed! But has that ensured the inward orthodoxy of the Christian heart, which breathes only Christian love? I am one of those who believe torturing and burning our fellow-creatures a worse heresy against the Gospel than the most perverse of those opinions of the miserable victims led by thousands to the stake. Take the converse. If the sound creed guarantees not the Christian life, so have not the most extreme opinions extirpated the blessed influences of the faith." He then cited predestinarianism as that which "might seem the most irreconcilable with the gospel of love," but that yet "among predestinarians . . . have been very many of the best and holiest, and—such is the triumph of the Christianised heart over the logic of the Christian understanding—the most loving of Christians.

"Still, . . . of this wedlock bond between Christianity and moral perfection, the divorce, by God's grace, never and nowhere was complete. The bill of divorce was not accepted.

Faithful to the last, faithful in the darkest times, faithful when the affections of her Lord might seem most entirely alienated, Christian morality would never be quite discarded. . . . If banished or standing apart in the high places of the world, in the lowest valleys of life, they were found in close, undisturbed companionship; like their Master, unobserved; like their Master, perhaps despised; like their Master, a hidden fountain of blessing welling forth through untraceable channels, fertilising, purifying, gladdening, an unconscious, perhaps ungrateful, world."¹

The fluctuations of this divorce he described candidly and temperately in the nine volumes of "Latin Christianity."² He was never harsh, but occasionally severe with a godly severity. He welcomed all evidence of the union between Christianity and morality, and blamed the many attempts at separation. The whole book shows how firmly he held cruelty and injustice to be the worst of heresies.

"Cyril of Alexandria," he said, "to those who esteem the stern and uncompromising assertion of certain Christian tenets the paramount Christian virtue, may be the hero, even the saint; but while ambition, intrigue, arrogance, rapacity, and violence are proscribed as unchristian means—barbarity, persecution, bloodshed, as unholy and unevangelic wickedness—posterity will condemn the orthodox Cyril as one of the worst of heretics against the spirit of the Gospel. Who would not meet the judgment of the Divine Redeemer loaded with the errors of Nestorius rather than with the barbarities of Cyril?"³

¹ Pp. 28-30.

² An abridgment of this work would be a valuable contribution to ecclesiastical history.

³ Vol. i. p. 186.

"I would," he wrote in the Preface, "remind the reader that if the course of affairs during these ages should appear dark, at times almost to repulsiveness, still in the dreariest and most gloomy period of Christian history there was always an under-current of humble, Christian goodness flowing on, as the Saviour Himself came, 'without observation,' the light of which we can discern, but by faint and transient glimpses."¹

In his histories of the Jews and of early Christianity he showed the same unprejudiced, fearless spirit. He claimed to have read and considered the writings of Strauss, Renan, and the Tübingen school, but could not sympathise with the results of their teaching. Nevertheless he had no fear for real Christianity:—

"For the perpetuity of religion, of the true religion, that of Christ, I have no misgivings. . . . As it was with the moral and religious superiority of Christianity—in other words, the love of God, diffused by Christ, 'by God in Christ,' which mainly subdued and won the world, so that same power will retain it in willing and perpetual subjection. The strength of Christ will rest not in the excited imagination, but in the heart, the conscience, the understanding of man."²

Similarly, in his sermon on Hebrew "Prophecy," referring to Strauss and Renan, though protesting against their views, he said:—

"Still, I believe we are on the advance; each of these is less anti-Christian than a Spanish bishop on the tribunal of the Inquisition, dooming to the fire a holocaust of victims

¹ P. vii.

² History of the Jews, Preface, pp. xxii., &c.

perhaps of the meekest and holiest lives. Christianity has survived the one; Christianity will survive the other.”¹

He does not appear to have believed in the inspiration of the letter of the Bible:—

“The revelation of moral and religious truth is doubtless the ultimate, I should say the sole, end of the Bible; nor is it difficult, according to ordinary common-sense, and to the moral instinct or judgment vouchsafed to man, to separate and set apart moral and religious truth from all other human knowledge. For the communication of such truths, law-givers, prophets, and apostles were gifted. . . . Law-givers, prophets, apostles, were in all respects men of like passions (take the word in its vulgar sense) with their fellow-men; they were men of their age and country, who as they spoke the language, so they thought the thoughts of their nation and their time, clothed these thoughts in the imagery and illustrated them by the circumstances of their daily life. They had no special knowledge on any subject, but moral and religious truth to distinguish them from other men; were as fallible as others on all questions of science, and even of history, extraneous to their religious teaching.”²

“Whoever was the author or compiler of the Pentateuch, whether Moses or not, as he was not a premature Newton, Cuvier, Lyell, so neither was he, nor any of the other writers of the Old Testament, a premature Thucydides, Tacitus, or like one of our great modern historians.”³

He recognised the development of religion among the nations, believing that they were making ready for Christianity. He noted that “Christianity is different in form in different periods of civilisation;” that it varies with the characteristics of the people who are its votaries,

¹ P. 38.

² History of the Jews (published 1866), Preface, p. ix.

³ Ibid., p. xii.

and predicted that "it will advance with the advancement of human nature, and keep up the moral to the utmost height of the intellectual culture of man."¹

Again, he said:—

"Of the future of Christianity what Christian will presume to despair? May not that future be the more complete reintegration of that eternal union, the more solemn ratification, as it were, of that Heaven-blessed marriage sacrament, perfect fusion of the religious and moral elements of our faith? We may believe not less profoundly though we believe in a more Christianised spirit. As it will most need, so the highest civilisation will submit, and only submit, to a Christianity which has shaken off all unworthy superstitions, the incrustation of ages upon its simpler doctrines. . . . I cannot and will not believe but that the advancement of mankind in arts, in science, in knowledge, in the knowledge of itself, the history of our race, the limits of our intellectual faculties, the powers of our language, in the intercommunion of family with family of nations, in civil and religious liberty, and in all that expands and elevates our being, will not eventually harmonise and enter into closer fellowship with the religion of Christ."²

He held creeds to have been necessary during the early centuries of Christianity "to compress the leading points of Christian doctrine into a small compass."³ It must not be overlooked that, though Dean Milman attached more importance to Christian conduct than to Christian faith, he never questioned the value of sound belief. For instance, he held that "the belief in Christ 'risen again' stamped upon the consciousness of human kind . . .

¹ History of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 47-8.

² Sermon on Hebrew Prophecy, p. 33.

³ History of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 440.

the *undying* conviction of our immortality.”¹ He would not for a moment admit that humanity could have evolved Christianity by her own powers. He accepted the miracles without demur. A change, however, seems to have come over him with regard to the value of the miraculous element in the propaganda of Christianity. In his Bampton Lectures of 1827 he said that the world could not have been converted without them. He cited the words of St. Chrysostom, that “the miracles themselves must be believed, or the greater miracle, that the world was converted without miracles.”² But in his sermon on “Hebrew Prophecy,” preached nearly forty years later, he pointed out that more conversions to Christ’s Gospel were wrought by its “religious blessings alone, the promise of pardon and immortality, the satisfaction of the spiritual necessities of our nature, the universal love which it displayed and taught, and evinced to the heart within and to the world without,” than by the “testimony of a miracle.” “How many conversions were made,” he exclaimed, “by that simple sentence ‘How these Christians love one another!’”³

His “History of the Jews” provoked the very greatest indignation. Stanley said: “It may be doubted whether any subsequent tumult or obloquy has been more passionate than that which beset the first appearance”⁴ of this work. People were deeply shocked to have Abraham spoken of as a “sheykh,” and the whole sacred history treated as history reverently but critically. Milman

¹ Hebrew Prophecy, p. 20.

² Bampton Lectures, p. 9.

³ Sermon on Hebrew Prophecy, pp. 26-7.

⁴ Essays on Church and State, p. 576.

received the attacks upon him with dignified silence. "It might have been thought," continued Stanley, "at the time of the tumult in 1830, that all future advance in the Church was closed against the historian of the Jews. So, perhaps, it might have been had this depended on the will of the clergy or the 'religious public.' But an enlightened statesman [Sir Robert Peel] . . . had the courage to present him to a stall at Westminster."¹ Henry Hart Milman was afterwards promoted to the Deanery of St. Paul's. Throughout his long life he showed himself always on the side of mercy, truth, and justice: more than one act of intolerance and injustice on the part of Convocation was opposed by the Dean of St. Paul's. He spoke also in favour of the relaxation of subscription to the Articles. Besides his many volumes on ecclesiastical history, he produced plays, poems, and essays; he annotated Gibbon's "History," and wrote his biography. Not the least of his contributions to the overthrow of prejudice in England was his production of his play "Fazio" at Covent Garden Theatre.

His Biblical criticisms were less destructive than those of some of his contemporaries even in England, but his whole tone was so liberal, so rational, and so just that he cannot but be placed among the Broad Churchmen of his day.

¹ *Essays on Church and State*, p. 577.

CHAPTER VIII.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

1805-1872.

To sum up in a few pages the teaching of F. D. Maurice is no easy matter, his style being often far from intelligible, and his turn of mind more mystic than critical, more enthusiastic than philosophic. He is scarcely to be reckoned as a Broad Churchman except for his influence upon others. He was somewhat of a dogmatist in his very denunciations of certain dogmas. He vaguely, yet passionately, asserted his belief in doctrines—though he called them facts—without making much pretence to explain them or to popularise them. He taught, or tried to teach, that salvation is by belief in a *Person*, not in a doctrine. But it is by no means easy to discover how he thought this salvation was brought about, whether by an acknowledgment of the existence of that Person, or by reproducing His character in ourselves. Maurice's teaching is not often practical, nor is his theology particularly reasonable; he set men thinking upon one or two points, and unmistakably believed, with his whole heart and soul, possibly also with his whole mind, in two great principles, viz., the Fatherhood of God and the importance of a Catholic Church.

He was one of the first English divines who came under the influence of German philosophy. He received his metaphysical training, chiefly at second hand, from S. T. Coleridge, who was not a very lucid nor always a very faithful exponent of his master, Kant. Maurice retailed again a species of Kantian philosophy even more confusedly and imperfectly.

In the Dedication of the "Kingdom of Christ" to Coleridge he said that he had learnt by the latter's teaching "the preciousness of the simple creeds of antiquity; the inward witness which a gospel of facts possesses, and which a gospel of notions must always want; how the most awful and absolute truths, which notions displace or obscure, are involved in facts, and through facts may be entertained and embraced by those who do not possess that faculty for comparing notions and have a blessed incapacity for resting in them."¹

Maurice held the Church to be the manifestation of God as Spirit, and accordingly thus expounded the Apostles' Creed:—

"It differs from all the digests of doctrine whether religious or philosophical. . . . A man is speaking in it. The form of it is, I believe. That which is believed in is not a certain scheme of divinity, but a name—a Father, who has made heaven and earth; His Son, our Lord, who has been conceived, born, and died, and been buried, and gone down into hell; who has ascended, and is at the right hand of God; who will come to judge the world; a Holy Spirit who has established a holy, universal Church, who makes men a communion of saints, who is the Witness and Power whereby

¹ Pp. xvi.-xvii.

they receive forgiveness of sins, who shall quicken their mortal bodies, who enables them to receive everlasting life. The creed is evidently an act of allegiance or affiance.”¹

Similarly, he sought to show the catholic nature of Christianity, as based upon the Fatherhood of God and sustained by the continual presence of the Holy Ghost:—

“The Spirit of God, by a wonderful demonstration, declares that He is dwelling among men; that an organised body of men has been provided for His habitation; that through this body His blessings are to be transmitted to the world; that through a portion of this body His blessings are to be transmitted to the rest.”²

“I have learnt to say to myself, ‘Take away the love of God and you take away everything. The Bible sets forth the revelation of that love, or it is good for nothing. The Church is the living witness and revelation of that love, or it is good for nothing.’”³

“I believe,” he said elsewhere, “He has brought men into an unity which is not based upon different notions and opinions, but upon the Divine Name, a Church for all kindreds and nations.”⁴

“Christ’s Church is a kingdom, and not merely a collection of sects bound together in the profession of particular dogmas.”⁵

Holding these views of the spiritual, not to say the supernatural, character of the Church, Maurice could not fail to attach far greater importance to it than did Arnold and those who regarded it as an earthly and temporary

¹ Kingdom of Christ (edition 1842), vol. ii. p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

³ Theological Essays, p. 13.

⁴ Sermons on the Prayer Book, p. 160.

⁵ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. p. 448.

institution. He held "that a Bible without a Church is inconceivable; that the appointed ministers of the Church are the appointed instruments for guiding men into knowledge of the Bible; that the notion of private judgment is a false notion; that inspiration belongs to the Church, and not merely to the writers of the Bible."¹

He blamed Colenso for "translating a book into a barbarous tongue for a barbarous people, which only gave its sense to Europeans when they had felt the stirrings of a national life and had a language capable of expressing more than animal wants."²

"The Church" he held to be "human society in its normal state; the world, that same society irregular and abnormal. The world is the Church without God; the Church is the world restored to its relation with God, taken back by Him into the state for which He created it."³

Upon this principle he attempted with some success to explain and justify the saying, "*Nulla salus extra Ecclesiam.*"

Maurice believed that the English Church approaches nearer to this Catholic ideal than does any other body. He was, therefore, constantly arguing with Romanists, Unitarians and Quakers. He held, moreover, that the services of the Church of England "distinctly and formally connect the gift of spiritual powers with ordination."⁴ Indeed, his views of the Christian ministry are somewhat mystical. In accordance with his belief in the

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. p. 270.

² Claims of the Bible and of Science, pp. 76-8.

³ Theological Essays, p. 396.

⁴ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. p. 466.

continuity of the Church, before as well as since the preaching of Christianity, he was bound to show that the apostolic was no violent departure from the prophetic and priestly system that preceded it, and that ours does and should differ in no essential respect from the apostolic, but is a combination of the prophetic and priestly orders. He wrote as follows in this connection, that—

“There were false prophets as well as true; worthy as well as scandalous priests;” and that “the best prophets were still Old Testament ministers, they were not ministers of the Spirit.”¹ (This seems indeed very strange, for what was the Old Testament as distinguished from the Spirit?) And further, that “when the Son of God came in human flesh, to proclaim Himself the source of all the order of the universe, it was inevitable that the outward organisation which had been forestalling His advent should be converted into one which assumed it for its ground. . . . The apostles . . . believed themselves to be continually, not momentarily, inspired. . . . They therefore delivered their appointed message with perfect calmness and coherency. . . . This was their notion of a New Testament ministry, and we say it ought to be ours. As ministers of the New Covenant, we must draw our rule of conduct from apostles and not from prophets. . . . He gave those apostles a new and more awful commission, accompanying the words with, ‘Receive the Holy Ghost.’”

He would admit of no sacerdotalism, however, for he reminded the ministers of the English Church that in the ordination service they are told that they exist for the sake of men, that all their authority is from God, that their only safety is in forgetting themselves, and their highest privilege is to be instruments in connecting

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 163-8.

the members of our race with each other and with their Lord." ¹

With regard to Absolution, he held that "every person who says that the sole office of a minister is to preach the Gospel, says so because he believes this is the way to absolve." ²

"Let it be considered patiently and calmly whether a priest, who habitually believes that as he may confess in the people's name, so he may absolve in Christ's name, must not have a humbler sense of his own insignificance, a greater confidence in an invisible kingdom, a more serious conviction that all men are meant to be members of it, than one who believes that he has ever so many gifts, merely bestowed for the purpose of enabling him to announce the message of salvation." ³

Maurice carried his approbation of the form of worship according to the Established Church of England to somewhat ridiculous lengths, such as demonstrating the meaning and wisdom of putting the Epistle before the Gospel, instead of the Gospel before the Epistle! Of the Book of Common Prayer in general, however, he said some true and beautiful things, for instance :—

"I claim it as the first and noblest distinction of our prayers that they set out with assuming God to be a Father, and those that worship Him to be His children." . . .

The second characteristic of our Prayer Book he took to be its universality :—

"They (the Reformers) claimed fraternity with men who in every place were calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether they were tied and bound by the chain of an

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 214-15.

² Ibid., pp. 137-8.

³ Ibid., p. 198.

evil system or had broken those bonds asunder. . . . If they will not have a common prayer with us, we can make our prayers large enough to include them—nay, to take in Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, all whose nature Christ has borne. For He is theirs as ours. . . . The baptized Church is not apart as a witness for exclusion, but against it.”¹

Again, with regard to the Creeds, he would not admit that they are dry, dogmatic statements, but that—

“They are made parts of our worship, acts of allegiance, declarations by the whole congregation of the name into which each one has been baptized, preparations for prayer, steps to communion. The notion of them as mere collections of dogmas is never once insinuated, is refuted by the whole order of the services.”²

Thus did Maurice, with perhaps some over-elaboration, set forth the universal character of Christianity, and the claims of the Church of England to be its best representative.

His views on Baptism and the Eucharist are mystic and sometimes obscure, though illuminating them all is that strong conviction of the love of God which is the redeeming feature of Maurice’s teaching.

Baptism he understood to be “the sign of admission into Christ’s spiritual and universal kingdom, and consequently that every person receiving that sign is *ipso facto* a member of that kingdom.” The baptized, he said, are thus addressed:—

“This is your position ; according to the conditions of it you are to live. It will not be an easy life. . . . But understand the nature of the battle. Your foes are not hindering you

¹ Sermons on the Prayer Book, pp. 10–11.

² Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. p. 461.

from obtaining a blessing; they are hindering you from entering into the fruition of one that has been obtained for you.”¹

“According to our doctrine we must say to Jews, Pagans, Turks, ‘There is a fellowship for you as well as for us. We have no right to spiritual privileges to which you have not as complete, as indefeasible a right. We protest against you, Jews, because you deny this, because you maintain that there is no fellowship for mankind. We protest against you, Pagans, because, by giving us different objects of worship, you necessarily divide us according to circumstances, customs, localities. We protest against you, Mohammedans, because, by affirming the greatest man to be merely a man, you destroy the communication between our race and its Maker;’² you suppose that communication to exist, if at all, merely for certain sages, not for every human creature.’”³

The Eucharist he connected with the doctrine of the Atonement, but, no doubt, in the widest interpretation of that doctrine.

“It is a pledge of that great and final victory, the mightiest pledge which God Himself has given us. It is a pledge that all the dark and carnal thoughts of men which have gathered about it and tried to draw it down to their own level, all those corruptions of it which have changed it into a minister of sense and an instrument of idolatry, shall be scattered altogether. . . . The connection between God and man has been lost out of theology; a notion has been substituted for a Living Being; a power working in past times for one that is acting in us now.”⁴

He asked whether the apostles at the first institution of this Sacrament could doubt “that here the partial views,

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. i. pp. 384-6.

² The curious dualism of Maurice's philosophy is exhibited in passages such as this.

³ Kingdom of Christ, vol. i. p. 411.

⁴ Sermons on the Prayer Book, pp. 306-7.

and one-sided words, and opposing thoughts of men, found their meeting-point and complete reconciliation? . . . that here it is apprehended how faith alone justifies, and how faith without works is dead? How it is that we act, and yet not we, but Christ in us? . . . Could they doubt that they were to lay the foundation of the Church on earth, and that this Sacrament was to give it permanency, coherency, vitality throughout all generations? And if this were their faith, why, I ask, is it not to be ours?"¹

Maurice protested against doctrinal and systematic religion being supposed of any value as compared with the "gospel of facts" or belief in a "Person."

"If I be asked," he said, "what is my objection to the Lutheran system, I answer this and no other—that it does not bear witness for the all importance of that fact which Luther asserted to be all important; that it teaches us to believe in justification by faith instead of to believe in a Justifier; that it substitutes for Christ a certain notion or scheme of Christianity."²

In the "Sermons on the Prayer Book" he said:—

"It seems to me, brethren, that the time is come when we must distinctly understand which of these meanings we attach to Christianity. . . . Either it is a system which will stand as long as there is an external power sufficiently strong to make it stand; . . . or it is the revelation of an eternal order, of a truth which cannot be shaken by any changes in the external economy of the world, but must be more fully manifested by each one; which cannot be weakened by any new discoveries respecting the physical structure of the earth, or respecting the condition of man, but must receive fresh light from all such; which

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 72-80.

² Ibid., vol. i. pp. 307-8.

does not depend for its evidence upon the proof that all who have entered into it imperfectly or not at all, were utterly false, but which recognises all that they have said or done truly, and gathers fresh confirmation from it; which will survive amidst the ruins of all systems, yet does not seek to ruin any, but rather to redeem the Divine truth in each from the mask in which it is hidden, and to unite it with all from which it has been separated.”¹

“To think of the unity of the Father with the Son in the Eternal Spirit, not as a dogma which we can embrace, but, as what the Creeds, following St. Paul, proclaim it to be—a mystery of that ineffable charity which is above all, and through all, and in us all; to think of this as the unity in which we are living, the full vision of which is the object of all hope and its highest reward; what elevation of mind, what humility of mind, would not be the result of such meditations!”²

But with all his repudiation of dogmatic teaching he would not admit much if any value to natural religion. Even “righteousness,” he held, “could never be revealed except to faith. God had called forth the faith of Abraham in His righteousness; he had believed in it, so he had become a righteous man, and able to do right acts.”³

Would he have admitted such faith in Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius? Probably not. Though he dealt generously with non-Christian religions, he attributed to them an origin differing not only in degree but in kind from that of Christianity. The latter, he urged, is a revelation from God, while the others are the strivings after Him of man.⁴

¹ Sermons on the Prayer Book, p. 121.

² Sermons on the Ground and Object of Hope for Mankind, pp. 74-5.

³ Ibid., p. 82.

⁴ Lectures on the Religions of the World, pp. 183-4.

Maurice's theory of inspiration is not more clear than any of his other theories and opinions. He admitted its general and unlimited nature; he said—

“We must suppose that we cannot think, believe, act without it; we must acknowledge that all wisdom, illumination, power to *will* and to do, proceed from the Divine Spirit.”¹

He considered the proof of the inspiration of the Bible to be chiefly moral:—

“When [people] confess that the ground of their hopes is *not* the infallibility of the letter of Scripture, but the Rock of Ages, the Living and Eternal Word, I am convinced they will love their Bibles far more.”²

“The religious world offers a premium to the scientific inquirer to make his conclusions fit the Bible conclusions. So it produces a race of quacks, who can always prove what they are wanted to prove; men in spirit much like the false prophets of old.”³

The whole meaning of the Hebraic account of the creation is, to his thinking, a recognition of the fact that *God created*. That the Bible is a revelation of the Divine moral order, and is not affected by occasional inaccuracies. “It seems to me that the Bible records the gradual revelation—the Divine evolution—of that Name into which we are baptized.”⁴ He was angry with Colenso for, as he thought, ignoring this, and ascribing too much importance to the correctness of the vehicle in which these Divine moral truths are conveyed. He said:—

¹ Claims of the Bible and of Science, p. 119.

² Ibid., pp. 107–8.

³ Ibid., p. 36.

⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

"Numerical facts are valuable, important, indisputable. But they do not constitute history; they do not even constitute the evidence of history. A very great exaggeration in numbers about the expeditions of Xerxes—if it can be proved—may make me doubt the information, or even the veracity, of Herodotus. It will not make me doubt the truth of a battle of Salamis and a battle of Platæa. It will not make me doubt the grand truth that a set of tiny European republics discomfited the great monarchy of Asia."¹

It is not impossible, though rather difficult, to reconcile this liberal attitude towards the letter of Scripture with his disquisition in "The Kingdom of Christ" on the same subject:—

"When you speak to me of verbal *inspiration*, though I do not like the phrase, . . . I subscribe most unequivocally to the meaning which I suppose latent in it. I have no notion of inspired thoughts which do not find for themselves a suitable clothing of words. . . . I must reject as monstrous and heretical the notion of *dictation*."²

It is difficult to believe that the Holy Spirit could have chosen geological, biological, and astronomical inaccuracies as "a suitable clothing of words," still less deeds of cruelty, folly, and immorality.

Or again with this assertion—

"I happen to be rather passionately addicted to the literal sense of the Old Testament."³

In his sermons "On the Old Testament" and "On the Doctrine of Sacrifice," Maurice took the Bible histories as chronicles of real events figuring moral truths. It was

¹ Claims of the Bible and of Science, pp. 74-6.

² Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 245-6.

³ Letter to Dr. Jelf on "The Word Eternal," p. 20.

not that he traced allegorical meanings in the histories intended by the writers, but that he believed the events took place by the will of God to teach certain lessons. He even found, or thought he found, in the chronological order of the Scriptures, the development of the doctrine of sacrifice from that of Abel to Christ!

Maurice—doubtless for conscience sake, and much against the dictates of his kind, gentle heart—turned from his old friend Colenso when he published his work on the Pentateuch. He accused him of attaching too much importance to the letter of Scripture, and forgetting its moral and spiritual side. He overlooked the fact that Colenso's main object was to purify the Divine element of the Bible from the blemishes of its human origin, and that many of his charges against the letter of Scripture were upon entirely moral grounds, such, for instance, as the passage which so startled the "intelligent Zulu," Exodus xxi. 20, 21.

In his pamphlet on "The Claims of the Bible and of Science," Maurice regretted his first wrath, and spoke of having been "unjust to the honesty of a man struggling with great difficulties in his own mind." He transferred his wrath, with his usual meekness, to himself and his fellow-clergy:—

"We have worshipped the letter of the Bible," he lamented, "until we are unable to read the letter of it. . . . We talk of it and of its authority, and its infallibility. *He* is not in all our thoughts. . . . If the Bishop of Natal and his arithmetic are instruments in overthrowing this idolatry, they may be instruments in making the history he tramples upon once more real and precious in our eyes."¹

¹ Pp. 76-8.

The love of God was indeed the keynote of Maurice's theology.

"The conviction of the love of God," he said, "is an absolute primary idea which cannot be reduced under any other; which cannot be explained away by any others; which no records, experiences, dogmas, if they have lasted for a thousand generations, can weaken or contradict; which must be the foundation of all thought, all theology, all human life. With such a conviction I believe it is as dangerous to trifle as with that respecting the Divine unity."¹

It was owing to this "conviction of the love of God" that Maurice so bravely repudiated the Calvinistic doctrines of the Atonement and of the eternity of punishment.

"If by redemption," he said, "you understand in any sense the deliverance of man out of the hand of God, the procuring a change in His purpose or will; then there is need of every kind of subtle explanation to show how the means corresponded to the end. But if you suppose that it is the spirit of a man which needs to be emancipated, a spirit fast bound with the chains of its own sins and fears, then I do not see what proof, save one, can be of any avail that a certain scheme of redemption is effectual. Appeal directly to the captive. See whether the announcement that the Son of God has died for him does not dissolve that horror of God, that feeling of Him as the tyrant, the forger of bonds, the inventor of a curse, by which he has been possessed."²

He grew almost eloquent over "the wretched notion of a private selfish heaven, where compensation shall be made for troubles incurred, and prizes given for duties performed in this lower sphere."³

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. i. pp. 175-6.

² Theological Essays, p. 141.

³ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. p. 443.

After saying that it is the love of God and not the fear of punishment that affects the dying sinner, he continued—

“But your language, pushed to its consequences, might prove that there is no heaven and no hell! Forgive me, that is the very consequence I dread from the perplexity into which you have led us. I believe that Christ came into the world expressly to reveal the kingdom of heaven, and to bring us into it. He and His apostles speak of it as the kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. . . . And since they reveal heaven to us, they of necessity make known hell also. The want of righteousness, truth, love, the state which is contrary to these, is and must be hell.”¹

“I may conclude, even if Christ did not tell me so expressly in all His parables, that the laws of God’s kingdom in its different regions are not different; that one must explain the other; that everywhere to know God, and work for God, and with God to help His creatures, to try and labour for the extirpation of evil, must be the good of spirits formed in God’s image; that everywhere sympathy, fellowship, affection must be the condition of right human existence; selfishness its plague and contradiction. I cannot believe the good anywhere, in any creatures, to have reached its climax, because Scripture and reason teach me that there must be an eternal growth in the knowledge of God, and in the power of serving Him.”²

“We have renounced, indeed, all notion of defining the limits of purgatory. We know that in the strictest sense this world is a purgatory, that there are fires here burning up the dross and refining the pure ore. . . . We have not instituted prayers for the dead, for Christ has said that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, since all live to Him. . . . But how dare we define God? How dare we say that Christ is not the Lord of both worlds? How can we

¹ Theological Essays, p. 182.

² Ibid., pp. 183-4.

check the Spirit of Love, who bids us pray 'for all men,' or tell Him that the prayer must be limited by barriers of space and time which Christ has broken down? And into what blasphemy does this notion lead us! We, poor selfish miserable creatures, desire the salvation and well-being of this or that fellow-creature, of Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; so we are more loving than the God of love! We are desiring a good for man which He does not desire. . . .

"We do not want theories of Universalism; . . . but we want that clear, broad assertion of the Divine charity which the Bible makes, and which carries us immeasurably beyond all that we can ask or think. What dreams of ours can reach to the assertion of St. John that death and hell themselves shall be cast into the lake of fire? I cannot fathom the meaning of such expressions. But they are written; I accept them, and give thanks for them. I feel there is an abyss of death into which I may sink and be lost. Christ's Gospel reveals an abyss of love below that; I am content to be lost in that. I know no more, but I am sure that there is a woe on us if we do not preach this Gospel, if we do not proclaim the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—the Eternal Charity. Whenever we proclaim that name I believe we invade the realm of night and eternal death, and open the kingdom of heaven."¹

For these honourable sentiments Maurice suffered persecution at the hands of Dr. Jelf, Principal of King's College, London, to which he submitted with a vexatious, almost culpable meekness, not only resigning his professorship, but considering whether he should not also retire from his church.

Of the question of the due observance of the Lord's day, which greatly agitated the religious world when it

¹ Theological Essays, pp. 442-3.

was proposed in 1852 that the Crystal Palace should be opened on Sundays for the benefit of the working classes, Maurice exhibited a wide and intelligent grasp. He said:—

That the command to work on six days is as stringent as to rest on the seventh; that worship ought to be rest; that the church should be shown to the people “as their Father’s house, as the home for His children, as the refuge for the poor, as the place where they are to realise their union with each other as well as with Him.” “The Sabbath day,” he continued, “should be a whole day, not a divided day, . . . a unity of *purpose*, unity of *spirit*. . . . If we insist on a uniformity of *occupation*, we demand that from others which we know that we do not practise—which we feel that we ought not to practise ourselves.”¹

“ . . . What help can prohibitions or restrictions afford us? Every Crystal Palace may be closed, but there will not be one human spirit more quickened or purified. If God does not teach us to show forth the power and meaning of His day of rest; . . . if He does not stir us up to proclaim the holiness of work as well as the holiness of rest, and to do what in us lies that it may be a blessing, not a curse, to those who are engaged in it, we may agitate the land against one tempter after another, but our flocks will not abide with us, and their blood will be required, not of those whom we denounce, but of us.”²

He concluded by boldly rejecting the rule that “when a case of doubt exists in our mind, we shall be acting more reverently and safely if we give the benefit of it to the side of strictness, not of laxity!” He said that “Christ did not act upon it.” “Instead of weakening the force and obligation of the Sabbath-day, no one ever sanctified it as He did. But in the judgment

¹ Sermons on the Sabbath, pp. 61-3.

² Ibid., p. 70.

of the men around him, He was, not once or twice, but continually breaking through rules which custom had established, and for which it pretended Scriptural authority.”¹

Maurice did not, in his theological writings, enter into the question of the origin of evil. He held a theory of a sort of primitive antagonism to good in man, a species of dualism which he did not account for, and which he looked to the Atonement to remedy. He also believed in the devil, arguing that because—

“There is a truth, a unity, a love existing under certain *forms*,” there must be “an absolute *Truth*, Unity, and Love, from which all these forms have derived their excellence and their existence. And that it is equally impossible to the reason . . . to contemplate the antagonist forms of evil without ascending to the belief of an evil which has impregnated these forms, and which can exist apart from them.”²

He looked for the resurrection of the body, saying—

“The inference that we should draw from the New Testament generally,” was “that Christ was buried in order that the body might be claimed as the heir of life, as redeemed from corruption.”³

He likewise accepted miracles, seeing in them testimonies to a spiritual kingdom, and not merely marvels—

[Witnesses] “that the Jehovah, the I am, the personal God, the Lord of the spirits of all flesh, is King of the world, that the gods of sense are not its kings, . . . that the Son of Man is the ruler of the winds and the waves, the sustainer and

¹ Sermons on the Sabbath, pp. 74-5.

² Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 417-18.

³ Theological Essays, p. 177.

restorer of animal life, the healer and tamer of the human spirit ; and that those who are the adopted children of God in Him, while they are doing His work, are not the servants of visible things, but their rulers.”¹

On all the main points of orthodox Christian theology, except the Atonement and the eternity of future punishment, Maurice was what is commonly called “sound.” The Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the Inspiration of the Bible, the efficacy of the Sacraments, the Incarnation and Resurrection were accepted by Maurice with hardly any demur. He has done nothing towards rationalising theology, and little towards distinguishing between salvation by creed and by conduct. It may be wondered how he ever came to be thought a Broad Churchman. The answer is, because of the width of his heart rather than of his intellect ; because of the power of his faith in God rather than of the profundity of his reasoning. He has exerted an influence indirect and often imperceptible, but yet true and real, upon many, even upon some who would hesitate to call themselves his followers. He has helped men to believe in the unfailing, universal, unselfish love of God, and before this faith all bitterness, all malice, all that worketh a lie, must needs at last perish and fall away.

¹ Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii. pp. 256-50.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

1819-1875.

THERE is no doubt that Charles Kingsley set great value on good works. Faith without works was, in his estimation, dead indeed. At the same time he sought to prove that right thinking is essential to right doing.

For instance, he said :—

“Some people are apt to say nowadays, ‘But what if one does hold false doctrine? That is a mistake of the head and not of the heart. Provided a man lives a good life, what matter what his doctrines are?’ . . .

“ . . . Unless you hold true doctrines, you will *not* lead good lives. . . . I believe false doctrine is very often not bred in the head at all, but in the heart, in the very bottom of a man’s soul! . . . that if his heart was right with God he would begin at once to have clearer and truer notions of the true Christian faith. I do not say that it is always so : God forbid ! But I do say that it is often so ! . . . I begin to understand the Athanasian Creed, which says, if a man does not believe rightly the name of God and the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, he will perish everlastingly. . . .

“There is a very serious example of this, to my mind, in what is called the Greek Church. . . . It seems to me—God forgive me if I am judging them hardly !—that because they denied that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Son, they forgot that He was the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit of Jesus

Christ, by whom He says for ever, 'Father, not My will but Thine be done !' . . . They forgot . . . that we may call God our Father, and say with Christ, 'Father, I come to do Thy will ;' and so in course of time they seem to have forgotten that Christian men were in any real practical sense God's children ; and when people forget that they are God's children they forget soon enough to behave like God's children, and to live righteous and God-like lives." ¹

This may not seem particularly well-reasoned, but then we must remember that argument was not Kingsley's strong point, nor were metaphysics much affected by him. He had, however, the common sense to avoid them more scrupulously than did his master and example—Maurice.

With very few exceptions, however, and those more prompted by that which he felt to be expected of him, and which he was too fearful of leading people astray by omitting altogether, Kingsley's sermons were entirely practical. Religion, even if he never put it in so many words, was with him essentially righteousness.

"How do we serve the living God ?" he asked.

"By dead works ? By mere outward forms and ceremonies, churchgoings, psalm-singsings, sermon-hearings ? Not so. These are right and good ; but they are dead works, which cannot take away sin, any more than could the gifts and sacrifices, the meats and drinks of the old Jewish law." ²

"Good works, as they call the likeness of God and the Divine life, are in too many persons' eyes only fruits of faith, proofs of faith, and not the very end of faith and of religion—ay, of their very existence here on earth—and therefore they naturally begin to ask how few good works will be enough to

¹ Town and Country Sermons, pp. 332-3.

² Discipline and other Sermons, p. 57.

prove their faith? . . . Christ came to deliver us from selfishness, from being slaves to our selfish prudence and selfish interest. But we make religion a question of profit and loss, as we make everything else. . . .

"What, then, is the end and aim of true religion? . . . To be followers, that is, copiers of God. . . . In other words, we are to be good; and religion, according to St. Paul, is neither more nor less than the act of becoming good, like the good God."¹

"To adore God for His goodness, and to pray Him to make us good, is the sum and substance of all wholesome worship."²

"Of Christian morals her [Christianity's] enemies have not complained; but that these morals have been postponed, neglected, forgotten, in the disputes over abstruse doctrines, over ceremonies, over no-ceremonies; that men who were all fully agreed in their definition of goodness, and what a good man should be and do, have denounced each other concerning matters which had no influence whatsoever on practical morality, till the ungodly cried, 'See how these Christians hate one another! See how they waste their time in disputing concerning the accidents of the bread of life, forgetful that thousands are perishing round them for want of any bread of life at all!'"³

". . . To be good and to do good, even to long to be good and to long to do good, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, is the best and highest sacrifice which any human being can offer to his Father in heaven. For so he longs and strives to be like that Father; to be good as God is good, holy as God is holy, beneficent and useful even as God is infinitely beneficent and useful—being, in one word, perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect. This is the best and highest act of worship, the truest devotion." . . .

¹ Discipline and other Sermons, pp. 93-7.

² Good News of God, and other Sermons, p. 58.

³ Discipline, and other Sermons, p. 282.

After quoting James i. 27, he went on:—

“Yes, every time we perform an act of kindness to any human being, ay, even to a dumb animal; every time we conquer our own worldliness, love of pleasure, ease, praise, ambition, money, for the sake of doing what our conscience tells us to be our duty, we are indeed worshipping God the Father in spirit and in truth, and offering Him a sacrifice which He will surely accept for the sake of His beloved Son, by whose Spirit all good deeds and thoughts are inspired.”¹

“But which is to come first, love to God or love to man? On this point men in different ages have differed and will differ to the end. One party has said, ‘You must love God first, and let love to man come after as it can;’ and others have contradicted them and said, ‘You must love all mankind, and let love to God take its chance.’ But St. John says neither of the two is before or after the other; you cannot truly love God without loving man, or love man without loving God.”²

Upon the question as to who are the righteous whom Christ represents as being surprised at the last day to find they have ministered to Him in ministering to their fellow-men, Kingsley referred to such as—

“Those two poor negresses . . . who found the African traveller, Mungo Park, dying of fever and starvation, and saved his life simply from human love—as they sung to themselves by his bedside—

‘Let us pity the poor white man :
He has no mother to make his bed,
No wife to grind his corn.’

“Perhaps it is such as these who have succoured human beings, they knew not why, simply from a Divine instinct, from the voice of Christ within their hearts, which they felt

¹ All Saints’ Day and other Sermons, pp. 382-6.

² Ibid., p. 151.

they must obey, though they knew not whose voice it was. Perhaps, I say, it is such as these that Christ will astonish at the last day by the words, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world !' " ¹

This firm belief in the power of love and goodness is indeed the keynote to the whole of Kingsley's theology. His theories of heaven and hell ; of the redemption of the race ; of established Churches ; of the conduct of communities in general, of the sects and the institutions of the English Church in particular ; and of social reforms : all show how deeply he was imbued with this principle.

He was constantly inveighing against selfish notions of heaven and hell—against wishing "to be saved from bodily pain in the next life, and to have bodily pleasure instead, and not wanting to be blessed."

"My friends," he said very sternly, addressing such believers as these, "why should Christ save you from death ? Of what use is your life to Christ or to any human being ? . . . What reason can you show why He should not take you away, and put some one in your place who *will* do his duty ? You are afraid of being lost. Why should you *not* be lost ? You are offensive, and an injury to the universe. You are an actual nuisance on Christ's earth and in Christ's kingdom. Why should He not, as He has sworn, cast out of His kingdom all things which offend, and you among the rest ? . . . Answer that : . . . And how that question is to be answered, I cannot see.

"The only men who can answer it—the only men, it seems to me, who have any hope of their prayers being heard—are those who, like the Psalmist, are trying to do something for Christ, and their neighbours, and the human race ; who are,

¹ All Saints' Day and other Sermons, pp. 351-2.

in a word, trying to be good. . . . They have . . . not a right, but a hope, through Christ's most precious and undeserved promises, that their prayers will be heard, and that Christ will save them from destruction, because they are at least likely to be worth saving, because they are likely to be of use in Christ's world, and to do some little work in Christ's kingdom."¹

"You think salvation means being saved from hell, and going to heaven when you die. And so it does; but I trust in God and in God's Holy Scriptures that it means a great deal more, for I think it means being unfit for hell and fit for heaven before we die."²

". . . Bear this in mind, that if the saints in heaven live the everlasting life, they must be living a life of usefulness, of love and of good works."³

Kingsley dared not disbelieve in the universal salvation of the race.

"My friends," he cried, "if we wish for the salvation of all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, do you suppose that we are more compassionate to them than God who made them? Who is more likely to pity the heathen? We who send a few missionaries to teach them, or God who sent His own Son to die for them?"⁴

Of infidels he said :—

"To God let us leave them, trusting in the Good Friday Collect and the good will of God, which is that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."⁵

Unlike his master, Maurice, Kingsley did not attach

¹ Westminster Sermons, pp. 145-50.

² Sermons on National Subjects, p. 178.

³ Good News of God, &c., p. 25.

⁴ Discipline, &c., p. 61.

⁵ Town and Country Sermons, p. 332.

paramount importance to an organised body for religious purposes.

“Even if, which God forbid, the connection between Church and State were dissolved; even if, which God forbid, the Church of England were destroyed for a while—if all churches were destroyed—yea, if not a place of worship were left for a while in this or any other land; yet even then, I say, we should still render to God the things which are God’s and offer to Him spiritual sacrifices, more pleasing to Him than the most gorgeous ceremonies which the devotion, or art, or wealth of man ever devised—sacrifices by virtue of which the Church would arise out of her ruins, like the Jewish Church after the Captivity, more pure, more glorious, and more triumphant than ever.”¹

These “spiritual sacrifices,” he proceeded to explain, are “repentance, thankfulness, and righteousness.”

In a sermon on “How to Keep Passion Week,” he said the right way was, “not so much by constant church-going and prolonged meditation as by believing in and addressing the Father’s perfect goodness, longing for and trying to copy that goodness here on earth.”²

“Not by merely hiding in our closets to meditate, even about *Him*; but by going about our work, each in his place, dutifully, bravely, as He went. By doing the duty which lies nearest to us, and trying to draw our lesson out of it.

“Thus we may keep Passion Week in spirit and in truth, though some of us may hardly have time to enter a church, hardly have time for an hour’s private thought about religion.”³

¹ All Saints’ Day, &c., p. 382.

² Town and Country Sermons, p. 196.

³ Ibid., p. 198.

Baptism he did not seek to define or defend ; he merely recognised in it a promise from God of entirely free grace to all who should receive it.

“ But we may fall from grace ; and then what good will our baptism be to us ? We shall be lost, just as if we had never been baptized.

“ My friends, if, though the sun was shining in the sky, you shut your eyes close and kept out the light, what use would the sunshine be to you ? You would stumble and fall, and come to harm, as certainly as in the darkest night. But would the sun go out of the sky, my friends, because you were unwise enough to shut your eyes to it ? The sun would still be there, shining as bright as ever. You would have only to be reasonable and open your eyes, and you would see your way again as well as ever.”¹

Of the mystery of the Holy Communion he spoke thus practically :—

“ St. Paul says that we really receive Christ in the Holy Communion. He does *not* say, as some do, that the Communion is merely a remembrance of Christ's death. He says that the faithful verily and indeed receive Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. . . .

“ Yes, my friends, by Christ all things live ; and therefore most of all by Christ our souls live. To be parted from Christ is death. To be joined to Christ and the body of Christ is life.

“ But what life ? The life of the soul. And what is the life of the soul ? Holiness, righteousness, sanctification, virtue—call it what pleases you best. I shall call it goodness. That is the only life of the soul, and why ? Because it is the life of Christ. That is the only wisdom of the soul, and why ? Because it is the mind of Christ. That is the living water, and why ? Because it flows eternally from Christ.

“ If what we receive in the Communion is Christ Himself,

¹ Sermons on National Subjects, p. 247.

the good Christ who is to make us good, then how can we receive it worthily if we do not hunger and thirst after goodness? If we do not come thither longing to be made good and sanctified, then we come for the wrong thing, to the wrong place."¹

Kingsley's sermons have some magnificent passages in them against bigotry and intolerance. The unpardonable sin of the Pharisees he took to be "bigotry; calling right wrong, because it did not suit their party prejudices to call it right." . . .

"Bigotry" he spoke of as "the flower and crown of all sins into which man can fall; the lowest of all sins, because a man may keep from every other sin with all his might and main, as the Pharisees did, and yet be led by bigotry into almost every one without knowing it. . . . The worst of all sins, because a man who has given up his heart to bigotry can have no forgiveness. He cannot; for how can a man be forgiven unless he repent? and how can a bigot repent? How can he confess himself in the wrong, when he fancies himself in the right?"²

"After all, let our differences be what they will, have we not one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in us all? If this be not bond enough between man and man, what bond would we have? Oh, my friends, when we consider this our little life, how full of ignorance and darkness; within us rebellion, inconstancy, confusion, daily sins and shortcomings; and without us disappointment, fear of loneliness, loss of friends, loss of all which makes life worth having—who are we that we should deny proudly one single tie which binds us to any other human being? . . . Who are we that we should judge another? to his own master let him stand or fall—'yea, and

¹ Town and Country Sermons, pp. 283-7.

² Sermons on National Subjects, pp. 207-13.

he shall stand,' says the Apostle, 'for God is able make him stand.' . . .

" . . . And if God be with them, who dare be against them ? Shall we be more dainty than God ? " ¹

" I cannot conceive," he continued, " why I should not hold out the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood to every man who fears God and works righteousness, of whatsoever denomination he may be. We believe the Apostles' Creed, surely, then think of the meaning of that one word, the Holy Spirit. We dare not say that he obeys them by an innate or natural virtue of his own, for that would be to fall at once into the Pelagian heresy ; neither dare we attribute his good deeds to an evil spirit, and say, ' However good they may look, they must be bad, for he belongs to a denomination who cannot have God's Spirit.' We dare not, for that would be to approach painfully near to the unpardonable sin itself, the sin against the Holy Ghost, the bigotry which says, ' He casteth out devils by the Prince of the devils.' Surely, if we be Christians and churchmen, we confess (for the Bible and the Prayer Book declare) that every good deed of man comes down from the fountain of good, from God, the Father of lights, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." ²

Kingsley indeed showed his love to God in love to man ; both in and out of the pulpit he worked unsparingly at social and sanitary reforms. By his novels, by his pamphlets and speeches, he exerted himself to the utmost to effect reforms in trade, in public morality, in hygiene. He had no fear of violating the sanctity of the pulpit by introducing such subjects as the preventibility of fevers, the true lesson of cholera, the bearings of scientific discovery on religion. He was one of the first to recognise that health of body is a religious duty.

¹ Sermons for the Times, p. 283.

² Ibid., p. 284.

"Two hundred thousand persons, I am told," he said in his sermon on national sorrows and national lessons, "have died of preventible fever since the Prince Consort's death ten years ago. Is that not a sin to bow our hearts as the heart of one man?"¹

Preaching in 1856 on the cholera, he acknowledged that fell disease to be the fault of man, due to the "offence of dirt, of filthy, careless habits of living," but that it was none the less a visitation of God to teach us to amend these our evil ways. He then protested against limiting the expression "visitation of God" to calamities, showing that God visits in a plentiful harvest as much as in the failure of the crops; also against the "atheism" of speaking of "'preparing to meet God,' as if we did not meet our God every time we had the choice between doing a right thing and doing a wrong one—between yielding to our own lusts and tempers, and yielding to the Holy Spirit of God."²

"I think that pestilences, conflagrations, accidents of any kind which destroy life wholesale, are . . . warnings from God;—judgments of God, in the very strictest sense—by which He tells men, in a voice awful enough to the few, but merciful and beneficent to the many, to be prudent and wise, to learn henceforth either not to interfere with the physical laws of His universe, or to master and to wield them by reason and science."³

Speaking of how the earth has been shaken by the Copernican, Darwinian, and geologic theories, and the heavens by the doubts, then recent, as to the consistency of the doctrine of endless torments with that of the love of God, he said:—

¹ All Saints' Day, &c., p. 318.

² Sermons on the Water of Life, &c., pp. 262-270.

³ Westminster Sermons, pp. 256-7.

"These questions—be they right or wrong—educated men and women, of all classes and denominations—orthodox as well as unorthodox—are asking, and will ask more and more, till they receive an answer; and if we of the clergy cannot give them an answer which accords with their consciences and their reason; if we tell them that the words of Scripture and the integral doctrines of Christianity demand the same notions of moral retribution as were current in the days when men racked criminals, burned heretics alive, and believed that every Mus-sulman whom they slaughtered in a Crusade went straight to endless torments—then evil times will come both for the clergy and the Christian religion for many a year henceforth."¹

He then went on to declare that the true kingdom of Christ is the same for ever, unchangeable and eternal:—

"Scripture does not say that we have an unchangeable cosmogony, an unchangeable theory of moral retribution, an unchangeable system of dogmatic propositions. Whether we have or have not, it is not of them that Scripture reminds the Jews, but of the changeless kingdom and the changeless King.

"At the Reformation in the sixteenth century [God] called on our forefathers to repent—that is, to change their minds—concerning the opinions which had been undoubted for more than a thousand years. Why should He not be calling on us at this time likewise? And if any answer that the Reformation was only a return to the primitive faith of the apostles, why should not this shaking of the hearts and minds of men issue in a still further return, in a further correction of errors, a further sweeping away of additions which are not integral to the Christian creeds, but which are left behind, through natural and necessary human frailty, by our great reformers?"²

Kingsley had no turn for Biblical criticism. He frequently astonishes one by the simplicity with which he accepted the letter and framework of the Bible as being

¹ Sermons on the Water of Life, &c., p. 99.

² Ibid., pp. 101-4.

as much inspired as the matter and contents. For instance, speaking of Matt. v. 25, 26, he said, "This parable our Lord seems to have spoken at least twice, as He did several others."¹ It never seemed to occur to him that the same utterance may have been repeated by the historians in two different connections. Again, he said, "If we read the Bible histories, one after another, in the same order in which God has put them in the Bible, we shall see that they are all regular steps in a line, that each story depends on the story which went before it; and yet in each fresh history we shall find God telling men something new—something which they did not know before."² He did not heed that the same story sometimes occurs twice over in different order, or that the context and sequence is often violated by some one episode or other. He thought the modern disbelief in possession by devils was prompted by the devil himself³—an argument in a circle that is *per se* quite unanswerable. The warning, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," he suggested had been directed against cannibalism, a crime which God foresaw and hereby warned against. It seems a pity the Almighty did not foresee and warn against other and less evidently imprudent crimes than this!

On questions of science Kingsley was more liberal, because he was better informed. His keen interest in all the natural sciences is well known. He bravely accepted the theory of evolution when few laymen, and hardly another clergyman, ventured to hold out a hand to it.

¹ All Saints' Day, &c., p. 247.

² Village Sermons, p. 89.

³ Ibid., p. 66.

In the preface to "Westminster Sermons" he said:—

" . . . Facts, whether of physical nature or of the human heart and reason, do not contradict, but coincide with, the doctrines and formulas of the Church of England."¹

"It may be most useful—I sometimes dream of a day when it will be considered necessary—that every candidate for ordination should be required to have passed creditably in at least one branch of physical science, if it be only to teach him the method of sound and scientific thought."²

Again, speaking of evolution being possibly true, he said:—

"What, in one word, should we have to say but this? We know of old that God was so wise that He could make all things; but behold He is so much wiser than even that, that He can make all things make themselves."³

Again—

"As for the theory [of evolution] being impossible: we must leave the discussion of that to physical students. It is not for us clergy to limit the power of God. . . All that we have to say on the matter is:—That we always knew that God works by very simple or seemingly simple means; . . . Ought God to seem less or more august in our eyes, when we are told that His means are even more simple than we suppose?"⁴

The whole of Kingsley's theology may be summed up in the words on his grave, "Amavimus, Amamus, Amabimus." Others may have discoursed about God and man more reasonably, but none more lovingly and faithfully than did Charles Kingsley, Rector of Eversley and Canon of Westminster.

¹ Preface to Westminster Sermons, p. v.

² Ibid., p. xxiii.

³ Ibid., p. xxvii.

⁴ Ibid., p. xxxi.

CHAPTER X.

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

1816-1853.

FEW men have, under such adverse circumstances and in so short a time, made as deep and lasting an impression on their age and nation as has Robertson of Brighton. Dying at an age when most men are only just beginning to be at all known, occupying a pulpit in a mere chapel of ease at a fashionable watering-place, the name of Robertson will nevertheless be remembered, and his influence felt, when many of his most distinguished and learned contemporaries are well-nigh or even wholly forgotten. Some have laid hold on Christianity by the heart, others by the head: Robertson comprehended it by both. Many, as we have seen, had emphasised the moral and ethical side of Christianity, but no one before Robertson so clearly set forth the sole and supreme importance of conduct, and at the same time did so much towards reconciling thoughtful and intelligent men to the speculations of theology. Since his day others have been better versed in science, history, philology, and philosophy, but no one has ever brought a more fearless spirit, a broader mind, or a warmer heart to bear alike on the principles and on the doctrines of Christianity.

Since his day knowledge has increased and thought has widened; others may have gone further, having had more light to guide them and newer paths to tread, but none have been braver, or have followed more faithfully than he whithersoever the truth should lead them. "Some people," he exclaimed, "are afraid of truth, as if God's truth could be dangerous! The straight road is ever the nearest. People *must* hear, and shall, what an earnest mind has to say."¹

One of the chief elements of his success was that he was more careful to strengthen truth than to eradicate error. "*Plant truth*," he said, "and the error will pine away." In consequence of this indirect attack upon falsehood, many read his sermons who would, if they really understood his mind, be too prejudiced to glance at them. The system has no doubt its disadvantages. Some are left in error, or are even confirmed in their previous opinions, after turning over his pages. But at least none can fail to discover that he steadfastly preferred goodness to orthodoxy, conduct to creed, nor can remain quite unshaken in all their prejudices.

His was no weak shrinking from battle. He loved truth too well to tolerate its real opposite. At the same time it was his constant practice to seek for and to exhibit "the soul of goodness in things evil, and to show that truth is made up of two opposite propositions, and not found in a *via media* between the two."²

"When, oh when, shall we learn that loyalty to Christ is

¹ Sermons, vol. v. p. 103.

² Life and Letters, vol. ii. pp. 160-1.

tested far more by the strength of our sympathy with truth than by the intensity of our hatred of error. I will tell you," he went on, "what to hate. Hate hypocrisy, hate cant, hate intolerance, oppression, injustice, hate pharisaism—hate them as Christ hated them, with a deep, living godlike hatred."¹

Even in the days of his Calvinism, before he, with some pain and inward conflict, separated himself from the party amongst whom he had grown up, he had resolved to preach the peculiar dogmas of that school very sparingly, and then "always connected with election unto *holiness*. The fact is," he said, "we have one thing, and only one, to do here on earth—to win the character of heaven before we die. This is practical, and simple to understand. . . . And with this great truth, what madness it is to spend our time in speculating about our election."²

Again, in one of his earliest published sermons, preached at Oxford in 1847, he warned his hearers against party-spirit, as being conducive to self-complacency and pharisaism. "*Be religious*," he said; "be not anxious to *seem so*."³

This conception of religion grew ever stronger with him. His sermons teem with passages such as the following:—

"Religion is goodness. To love God and to love man is Christianity; all else is only husk and shell."⁴

Thus he summed up the essentials of Christian doctrine:—

"That God is the Father of all the human race, and not a mere section of it; that all men are His children; that it is a

¹ Sermons, vol. ii. p. 274.

² Life and Letters, vol. i. p. 108.

³ Ibid., vol. v. p. 40.

⁴ Ibid., p. 304.

Divine Spirit which is the source of all goodness in man ; that the righteousness acceptable in His sight is not ceremonial, but moral goodness ; that the only *principle* which reconciles the soul to God, making it at one with God, is self-sacrifice.”¹

He described the teaching of Christ as that—

“which identified religion with goodness—making spiritual excellence, not ritual regularity, the righteousness which God accepts— . . . which simplified the whole matter by making religion a thing of the heart, and not of rabbinical learning or theology.”²

Or more briefly—

“The religion of Christ is not a law but a spirit—not a creed, but a life.”³

In a very beautiful and sympathetic sermon on the conversion of Zacchæus occurs this passage :—

“Salvation that day came to Zacchæus’ house. What brought it? What touched him? Of course ‘the Gospel.’ Yes ; but what is the gospel? What was his gospel? Speculations or revelations concerning the Divine nature? the scheme of the Atonement? or of the Incarnation? or baptismal regeneration? Nay, but the Divine sympathy of the Divinest Man. The personal love of God manifested in the face of Jesus Christ.”⁴

In an address at the Working-men’s Institute at Brighton, he said, speaking of that state of infidelity “which deserves compassion rather than indignation”—

“It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning, and seems shrivelled into a span ; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which

¹ Lectures on Corinthians, pp. 245-6.

² Sermons, vol. i. pp. 150-1.

³ Ibid., p. 269.

⁴ Ibid., p. 94.

God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should be his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle his doubts, which for aught he knows may arise from the fountain of truth itself; to extinguish as a glare from hell, that which for aught he knows may be light from heaven; and everything seems wrapped in hideous uncertainty. I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. . . . If there be no God and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. . . . Thrice blessed is he who, when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from him, has obstinately clung to moral goodness. Thrice blessed, because *his* night shall pass into clear, bright day.”¹

Religion with Robertson was strictly anti-dogmatic:—

“Let a child’s religion,” he said, preaching especially to those of his flock who had been recently confirmed, “be expansive—capable of expansion—as little systematic as possible: let it lie upon the heart like the light loose soil, which can be broken through as the heart bursts into fuller life. If it be trodden down hard and stiff in formularies, it is more than probable that the whole must be burst through and broken violently and thrown off altogether, when the soul requires room to germinate.”²

Holding these views as to the essentials of Christianity, it is not surprising that Robertson’s theory of the Christian Church should have been even larger than that of Arnold, and more truly spiritual than that of Maurice.

Referring to Acts xix. 1, 2, he said upon one occasion—

¹ Lectures and Addresses, pp. 65-7.

² Sermons, vol. i. pp. 55-6.

"They are called 'certain disciples'—that is, of Jesus. They knew little enough of Christianity; they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the Trinity they knew not, nor that of sanctification, nor probably that of the Atonement. And yet in the Word of God they are called disciples of Christ."¹

"Mark," he said elsewhere, "you do not become a Christian by entering the true Church, but the Church is made by true Christians entering it. It is not the Church which makes Christians, but Christians which make the Church."²

In a sermon on "Salvation out of the Visible Church" he said:—

"There are some of us who can believe in the Christianity of those who are a little beyond our own Church pale; some who even dimly suspect that God may love the Jew; some, too, who will be ready, with qualifications, to acknowledge a benighted Roman Catholic for a brother; but how many of us are there who would not be startled at being told to love a Unitarian? How many would not shrink from the idea as over-bold that he who is blind to the Redeemer's Deity, yet loving Him with all his heart, may perchance have that love accepted in place of adoration, and that it may be at our peril that we call him 'common or unclean?'"³

" . . . We are told that Noah was saved by faith. Faith in what? In the Atonement? or even in Christ? Nay, but in the predicted destruction of the world by water; the truth he had, not the truth he had not. . . . Salvation, therefore, is annexed to faith. Not necessarily faith in the Christian object, but in the truth, so far as it is given. Does God ask more?

"From all this we are constrained to the conviction that there is a Church on earth larger than the limits of the Church visible;

¹ Sermons, vol. iv. p. 149.

² Ibid., vol. v. p. 67.

³ Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 137-8.

larger than Jew or Christian, or the Apostle Peter, dreamed ; larger than our narrow hearts dare to hope even now. They whose soarings to the First Good, First Perfect, and First Fair, entranced us in our boyhood, . . . will our hearts *allow* us to believe that they have perished? Nay. 'Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.' The North American Indian who worshipped the Great Spirit, and was thereby sustained in a life more dignified than the more animalised men amongst his countrymen ; the Hindoo who believed in the rest of God, and in his imperfect way tried to 'enter into rest,' not forgetting benevolence and justice—these shall come, while 'the children of the kingdom,' men who, with greater light, only did as much as they, 'shall be cast out.'

" . . . It may be that I err in this. It may be that this is all too daring. Little is revealed upon the subject, and we must not dogmatise. I may have erred, and it may be all a presumptuous dream. But if it be, God will forgive the daring of a heart whose hope has given birth to the idea ; whose faith in this matter simply receives its substance and reality from things hoped for, and whose confidence in all this dark, mysterious world can find no rock to rest upon amidst the roaring billows of uncertainty except 'the length, and the breadth, and the depth, and the height of the love which passeth knowledge,' and which has filled the universe with the fulness of His Christ." ¹

These were indeed bold words, for it must be remembered that the judgment of the Privy Council on "Essays and Reviews" had not then set the seal of the Church of England upon the liberty of her sons to speculate and to hope in this matter ; and that Maurice was at about this time expelled from King's for holding similar opinions.

¹ Sermons, vol. iv. pp. 141-4.

With these large views of Christianity and the Church, it was natural that Robertson should have been uncompromisingly opposed to all sacerdotalism and priestcraft.

"This is the ministry and its work—not to drill hearts and minds and consciences into right forms of thought and mental postures, but to guide to the living God who speaks. It is a thankless work, for . . . men love to have all their religion done out for them. They want something definite and sharp and clear—words—not the life of God in the soul. . . .

" . . . To bring the soul face to face with God, and supersede ourselves, that is the work of the Christian ministry."¹

"The Christian ministry is preparatory, and accordingly the Church of England caught the spirit of that ministry and represented it by the ministry of John the Baptist. The minister of Christ is but a herald to prepare His coming; and then, and only then, has he done his work when he has endeavoured to detach trust and admiration from himself and to fasten them upon Jesus Christ; and when he feels that he is becoming every day less and less necessary to those whom he has taught, because he has imparted to them all he knows, and led them to the everlasting fountain which shall never be exhausted. The very spirit of the Christian ministry consists in those blessed words, 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' I fulfil my course, it will soon be done. I point to Christ."²

"Whenever," he said, "you find a man trying to believe or to make others believe himself to be necessary to their salvation and progress, saying, 'Except ye be circumcised, except ye believe what I teach, except I baptize you, ye cannot be saved,' there you have a priest, whether he be called minister, clergyman, or layman. But whenever you find a man anxious and striving to make men independent of himself, yea, independent of *all* men; desiring to help them, not to rest on his authority, but to stand on their own faith, not his; that they

¹ Sermons, vol. iv. pp. 8-9.

² *Ibid.*, vol. v. pp. 149-50.

may be elevated, instructed, educated—wishing for the blessed time to come when his services shall be unnecessary and the prophecy be fulfilled, ‘They shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest,’ *there* you have the Christian minister, the servant, ‘the helper of your joy!’”¹

Robertson held the same views of prophecy as Arnold, viz., that it was not the prediction of future events, but the declaration of eternal truths.

“Nothing,” he declared, “destroys the true conception of the prophet’s office more than those popular books in which their mission is certified by curious coincidences. For example, it is predicted that Babylon shall be a desolation, the haunt of wild beasts, &c., then some traveller has seen a lion standing on Birs Nimroud. . . . But this is to degrade the prophetic office to a level with Egyptian palmistry. . . . But, in truth, the first office of the prophet was with the present. He read eternal principles beneath the present and the transitory, and in doing this, of course, he prophesied the future; for a principle true to-day is true for ever. But this was, so to speak, an accident of his office, not its essential feature. If, for instance, he read in the voluptuousness of Babylon the secret of Babylon’s decay, he also read by anticipation the doom of Corinth, of London, of all cities in Babylon’s state. . . . A philosopher saying in the present tense the law by which comets move predicts all possible cometary movements.”²

This leads us to the subject of *inspiration*. Robertson avowed himself in this respect a heretic after the manner of Arnold, and intended, had he lived, writing a book upon the matter. “We must remember,” he said, “that inspiration is one thing, infallibility is another. God the Holy Ghost, as a sanctifying Spirit, dwells in human beings with partial sin. Is it inconceivable that God, the

¹ Lectures on Corinthians, p. 329.

² Sermons, vol. ii. p. 158.

inspiring Spirit, should dwell with partial error? Did He not do so, He could not dwell with man at all."¹

"Revelation," he said, preaching on Gal. iii. 24, "is progressive."

"Understand what we have in the Bible—not truth absolute, but truth relative. . . . If we think that Moses, Job, David knew, except most dimly, what we know, we confound the different ages of revelation. Or, if we suppose that even the truths we have now are aught but the dimmest dawn of that blaze of truth which shall be in the coming revelation, we lose the doctrine of this text. For there is no revelation but the ever-continuing."²

"No ingenuity can reconcile the formal statements respecting creation made by Moses with those made by modern science. For the Bible is not a scientific work; it does not deal with hypotheses, nor with formal facts which are of time, and must necessarily vary, but it declares *eternal principles*. It is not a revelation of the truths of geology or astronomy, but it is a revelation of the character of God to us."³

Furthermore he impressed upon his hearers that—

"The revealed Message does not create the facts of our humanity—it simply makes them known. The Gospel did not make God our Father—it authoritatively reveals that He is so. It did not create a new duty of loving one another—it revealed the old duty which existed from eternity, and must exist as long as humanity is humanity. It was no 'new commandment' but an old commandment which had been heard from the beginning."⁴

To Robertson revelation was not confined to one book or even to one man, but "is made by a spirit to a spirit.

¹ Lectures on Corinthians, p. 235.

² Sermons, vol. v. pp. 250-1.

³ Lectures on Corinthians, pp. 285-6.

⁴ Sermons, vol. i. pp. 289-90. In the preceding sermon he had explained that the *newness* of the commandment consisted in its "being made the central principle of a system," p. 269.

‘God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit.’ Christ is the voice of God *without* the man—the Spirit is the voice of God *within* the man. The highest revelation is not made by Christ, but comes directly from the Universal Mind to our minds.”¹

Here, as elsewhere, Robertson was at more pains to confirm the true than to overthrow the false. He admitted, though with some diffidence, that the story of Balaam’s ass speaking may have been a vision, but added, “There is too much profound truth throughout this narrative for us to care much about either the literal or the figurative interpretation.”²

He was willing to admit miracles, only not as contraventions of the laws of nature, but as higher operations of the same laws. “The intention of a miracle” being, he insisted, “to manifest the Divine in the common and ordinary.”³

“Miracles are commonly reckoned as proofs of Christ’s mission, accrediting His other truths, and making them, which would be otherwise incredible, evidently from God. I hesitate not to say that nowhere in the New Testament are they spoken of in this way,— . . . [*i.e.* as] a portable volume of evidences to prove that God is love; that we should love one another; that He is the Father of all men. These need no proof, they are like the sun shining by his own light.

“Christ’s glorious miracles were not to prove these, but that through the seen the unseen might be known; to show as it were by specimens the living power which works in ordinary as well as extraordinary cases.”⁴

We must now glance at Robertson’s theology. To him God was very real. “Our souls float,” he said with great

¹ Sermons, vol. i. p. 11.

² Ibid., vol. iv. p. 40.

³ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 48.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 100-1.

fervour, "in the unmeasurable ocean of Spirit. God lies around us; at any moment we might be conscious of the contact.

"The *condition* upon which this self-revelation of the Spirit is made to man is love. . . .

"Love to God can only mean one thing—God is a character. For instance—God is purity. And to be pure in thought and look; to turn away from unhallowed books and conversation; to abhor the moments in which we have not been pure, is to love God.

"God is love—and to love men till private attachments have expanded into a philanthropy which embraces all—at last even the evil and enemies, with compassion—that is to love God. God is Truth—to be true, to hate every form of falsehood, to live a brave, true, real life, that is to love God."¹

"The love of God is the love of goodness. . . . None loves God but he who loves good. To love God is to love what God is. . . .

" . . . The love of goodness only becomes real by *doing* good. Without this it remains merely a sickly sentiment. It gets body and reality by acting. . . .

"The love of God is the love of man expanded and purified. It is a deep truth that we cannot begin with loving God; we must begin with loving man."

" . . . To love man is to love God. . . . To do good to man will be recognised hereafter as doing good to Christ."²

His treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity is not perhaps quite satisfactory. He did but little to rationalise it; arguing—charitably, calmly, and candidly, of course—that as there are different parts or powers in the nature of man—that is, the imagination, intellect, and affections—yet it is the same man working in all; "So certain special works are attributed to certain person-

¹ Sermons, vol. i. pp. 12-13.

² Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 69-72.

lities of the Deity, . . . the whole Deity ‘performs’ that work which is attributed to one essential.”¹

He had entered somewhat into the study of German philosophy, but had not apparently pursued it very deeply. There are traces in his writings of its influence, and it may be believed that had he had time and patience to devote to it, he would have made an important contribution to the philosophy of religion. In his explanation of the origin of evil he showed indeed rare depth of thought as well as courage of utterance:—

“God,” he said, “has created in man a will which has become a cause. God can do anything. I know not that. God cannot deny Himself—God cannot do wrong—God cannot create a number less than one—God cannot make a contradiction true. It is a contradiction to let man be free and force him to do right. . . . Without freewill there would be no human goodness. . . . But once acknowledge freewill in man, and the origin of evil does not lie in God.

“ . . . In our own freewill—in the grand and fearful power we have to ruin ourselves—lies the real and only religious solution of the mystery.”²

Robertson’s judgment upon sin was unsparing. His doctrine of hell was that it is repulsion from Christ—“the punishment of being base”—“of no longer striving after goodness, or aspiring after the life of God.”³

“Hell is the infinite terror of the soul, whatever that may be. . . . It is the hell of having done wrong, the hell of having had a spirit from God pure, with high aspirations, and to be conscious of having dulled its delicacy and degraded its desires; . . . infinite, maddening remorse; the hell of knowing that every chance of excellence, and every opportunity of

¹ Sermons, vol. iii. p. 61.

² Ibid., vol. i. pp. 21–2.

³ Ibid., p. 226.

good has been lost for ever. This is the infinite terror, this is the wrath to come.”¹

This would indeed be hell to a pure and noble soul like that of Robertson. How could he have failed to see that such a hell could not possibly be final—that it must end either in salvation or in annihilation? And yet there is little or nothing in his writings to show that he doubted that the punishment of the wicked is endless, except perhaps this:—

“Would you and I have dared to hope over a grave like Saul’s? So too, over the grave of the prophet whose last act was disobedience, love still dared to hope, and the surviving prophet remembered only that he had shared the gift of prophecy with himself. ‘Alas, my *brother*!’ A sinner who had died in sin, but, as our own Burial Service nobly dares to say, in the hope of intense charity, ‘to rest in Thee, as our hope is this our brother doth.’”²

He held, however, no sordid, “other-worldly” views of heaven:—

“Reward is not the result of merit. It is, in the order of grace, the natural consequence of well-doing. It is life becoming more life. It is the soul developing itself. It is the Holy Spirit of God in man making itself more felt, and mingling more and more with his soul, felt more consciously, with an ever-increasing heaven.”³

Perhaps the most suggestive of Robertson’s contributions to the thought of the age was his doctrine of Christ. One of the main objects of his life was to teach “that belief in the Human character of Christ’s Humanity must be antecedent to belief in His Divine origin.”⁴ To him

¹ Sermons, vol. i. p. 134.

³ Ibid., vol. i. pp. 160-1.

² Ibid., vol. iv. p. 236.

⁴ Life, vol. ii. p. 261.

Christ was the realised ideal of the race; doing nothing *instead* of mankind, but as representative of mankind; self-sacrifice and disinterested goodness being at once the essentials of the Christian religion and the root-virtues of the race. Humanity being really Divine in its origin, Christ is necessarily Divine; God being the origin of humanity, God is also Human.¹

This theory is developed in the following passage:—

“Christ is the realised idea of humanity. He is God’s idea of man completed. There is every difference between the ideal and the actual—between what man aims to be and what he is. . . .

“In Christ, therefore, God beholds humanity; in Christ He sees perfected every one in whom Christ’s Spirit exists in germ. . . . We are feeble, dwarfish, stunted specimens of humanity. . . . But to the Infinite Eye, who sees in the perfect One the type and assurance of that which shall be, this dwindled humanity of ours is Divine and glorious. . . . This is what theologians, at least the wisest of them, meant by ‘imputed righteousness.’ . . . They did not suppose that in imputing righteousness there was a kind of figment, a self-deception in the mind of God; they did not mean that by an act of will He chose to consider that every act which Christ did was done by us; . . . but He saw humanity submitted to the law of self-sacrifice; in the light of that idea He beholds us as perfect, and is satisfied. . . . The value of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender of self-will. . . . The profound idea contained, therefore, in the death of Christ is the duty of self-surrender. . . .

“... The whole life of God is the sacrifice of self. God is love. . . . All the life of God is a flow of this Divine self-giving charity. Creation itself is sacrifice—the self-impartation of the Divine Being. Redemption, too, is sacrifice, else

¹ See Sermons, vol. i., sermons vii. and ix.; vol. iv., sermons xvii. and xxiii.

it could not be love; for which reason we will not surrender one iota of the truths that the death of Christ was the sacrifice of God—the manifestation once in time of that which is the eternal law of His life.

“ . . . The sacrifice of Christ is done over again in every life which is lived not to self but to God.”¹

The following must suffice for an example of Robertson's teaching on the divinity of the race:—

“ . . . Ages before Christ appeared they who gave themselves up to God to be led, instead of to their own hearts, did actually reduce to practice and manifested in their lives those very principles which, as principles, were only revealed by Christ.

“ . . . Some perhaps may be shocked at dwelling on this thought; it seems to them to derogate from Christ. This is as if they thought that they honoured Christ by believing that until He came no truth was known—that He created truth. . . . But in truth this is a corroboration of Christianity. Christianity is a full revelation of the truth of life into which every one who had been here had, in his measure, struck his roots before. It is simply the truth, ‘the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,’ and all instances of such a life only corroborate the truth of the revelation.”²

“ Do not fancy that Christianity created these feelings of tenderness and compassion by commanding them. Christianity declares them, commands them, and sanctions them, because they belong to man's unadulterated nature. Christianity acknowledges them, stamps them with the Divine seal, but they existed before, and were found even among the Egyptians and Assyrians.”³

Of the humanity of God he said:—

“ Scripture has taken peculiar pains to give assurance of the continuance of [Christ's] humanity. . . . And this typifies

¹ Sermons, vol. iii. pp. 109–115.

² Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 177–8.

³ Ibid., p. 253. See also vol. i. No. xxi.

to us a very grand and important truth ; . . . the truth of the human heart of God. We think of God as a Spirit, infinitely removed from and unlike the creatures He has made. But the truth is man resembles God : all spirits, all minds are of the same family. The Father bears a likeness to the Son whom He has created. The mind of God is similar to the mind of man. Love does not mean one thing in man, and another thing in God. Holiness, justice, pity, tenderness—these are in the Eternal the same in kind which they are in the finite being. The present manhood of Christ conveys this deeply important truth, that the Divine heart is human in its sympathies.”¹

Robertson was ever most anxious to keep before his hearers the humanity of Christ and of God :—

“That Divinity of His is made the pass-key by which we open all mysteries with fatal facility, and save ourselves from thinking of them. We get a dogma, and cover truth with it : we satisfy ourselves with saying Christ was God, and lose the precious humanities of His heart and life.”²

“By an exaggerated dwelling upon Christ's Divinity,” he said, “we lose the Saviour. For it is well known that He was Divine ; but if we lose that truth we should still have a God in heaven. But if there has been on this earth no real, perfect human life, no love that never cooled, no faith that never failed, which may shine as a lodestar across the darkness of our experience, a light to light amidst all convictions of our own meanness and all suspicions of others' littleness,—why, we may have a religion, but we have not a Christianity. For if we lose Him as a Brother, we cannot feel Him as a Saviour.”³

“The Unitarian maintains a Divine humanity—a blessed, blessed truth. There is a truth more blessed still—the humanity of Deity. Before the world was, there was that in the mind of God which we may call the humanity of His Divinity.”⁴

¹ Sermons, vol. i. pp. 114-15.

³ Ibid., p. 137.

² Ibid., vol. ii. p. 293.

⁴ Ibid., vol. iii. p. 64.

The more special doctrines, such as Baptism, Absolution, the observance of the Lord's day, &c., Robertson touched with the divine magic of the Christian principle. He was not indifferent to forms and ceremonies; on the contrary, he sternly cautioned men against neglecting such means of grace as private prayer, "attendance at the Lord's table," and, in short, "giving up all that is symbolic in religion."¹ At the same time he most emphatically held that—

"It is not the ceremony that makes a thing religious; a ceremony can only *declare* a thing religious. The Church cannot make sacred that which is not sacred; she is but here on earth as the moon, the witness of the light in heaven; by her ceremonies and her institutions to bear witness to eternal truths."²

Acting upon what he himself declared to be "our duty," viz., "to vitalise our forms, to throw into them a holier, deeper meaning,"³ he explained baptism to be the proclamation, not the creation, of a child of God.⁴

"Baptism is a visible witness," he said, "to the world of that which the world is for ever forgetting—a common humanity united in God. Baptism authoritatively reveals and pledges to the individual that which is true of the race."⁵

"Baptism is the token of a Church, the token of a universal Church. Observe the importance of its being the sacrament of a universal Church instead of the symbol of a sect. Not episcopacy, not justification by faith, nor any party badge, but 'one baptism.' How blessed on the strength of this to be able to say to the baptized Dissenter, 'You are my brother; you anathematise my Church, link popery and prelacy to—

¹ Lectures on Corinthians, pp. 197–8.

² Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 279–80.

³ Ibid., vol. iii. p. 187.

⁴ See vol. ii., Sermon No. iv.

⁵ Ibid., p. 63.

gether, malign me, but the same sign is on our brow, and the same Father was named over our baptism.' Or to say to the baptized Romanist, 'You are my brother too—in doctrinal error, perhaps, in error of life it may be too: but my brother. Our enemies are the same, our struggles the same, our hopes and warfare the very same.' Or to the very outcast, 'And you too, my poor degraded friend, are my brother still—sunk, oblivious of your high calling; but still, whatever keeps you away from heaven keeps you from your own.' . . . Of course this is very offensive. What! the Romanist my brother! . . . Yes, even so; and it is just your forgetfulness of what baptism is and means that accounts for that indignation of yours. Do you remember what the elder brother in the parable was doing? He went away sulky and gloomy because one, not half so good as himself, was recognised as his father's child."¹

Again, of Absolution he said:—

"The priest proclaims forgiveness authoritatively as the organ of the congregation—as the voice of the Church, in the name of Man and God. For human nature represents God. The Church represents what human nature is and ought to be. The minister represents the Church. He speaks, therefore, in the name of our godlike human nature. He declares a Divine fact; he does not create it."²

". . . By every magnanimous act, by every free forgiveness with which a pure man forgives, or pleads for mercy, or assures the penitent, he proclaims this truth, that 'the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins'—he exhibits the priestly power of humanity—he *does* absolve; let theology say what it will of Absolution, he gives peace to the conscience—he is a type and assurance of what God is—he breaks the chains and lets the captive go free."³

With regard to the Sabbath he fearlessly claimed that the bindingness of the fourth commandment had passed away. That it was "Jewish, shadowy, typical."⁴ That

¹ Sermons, vol. ii. p. 77-8.

² Ibid., vol. iii. p. 83.

³ Ibid., vol. iii. p. 86.

⁴ Ibid., vol. i. p. 96.

"the spirit of Judaism is separation, that of Christianity is permeation. . . . The very essence of Hebrew holiness lay in sanctification, in the sense of separation. On the contrary Christianity . . . desires to transfuse the spirit of the day of rest into all other days, and to spread the holiness of one nation over all the world. To saturate life with God, the world with heaven, that is the genius of Christianity."¹

Accordingly he argued that that which was a prescription and regimen for a nation in disease is no hard and fast rule for one in health. "When is a son of man lord of the Sabbath day? to whom may the Sabbath safely become a shadow? I reply, He that has the mind of Christ may exercise discretionary lordship over the Sabbath-day. . . . Win the mind of Christ—be like Him—and then, in the reality of the rest in God, the Sabbath form of rest will be superseded."²

". . . We are bound by the spirit of the fourth commandment, so far as we are in the same spiritual state as they to whom it was given."³

At the same time he warned against "multiplying restrictions and requirements beyond what is essential," and suggested that possibly in some cases "the rigorous rule was itself the stimulating, moving cause of sin;" that when a "young man, worn out with his week's toil, first stole into the fields to taste the fresh breath of a spring day, he did so with a vague, secret sense of transgression, and that having, as it were, drawn his sword in defiance against the established code of the religious world, he felt that thenceforward there was for him no return, and so he became an outcast, his sword against every man, and every man's sword against him. . . . I cannot but believe that the false Jewish notions of the Sabbath-day which are prevalent have been exceedingly pernicious to the morals of the country."⁴

¹ Sermons, vol. i. pp. 99-100.

² Ibid., p. 109.

³ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 187.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 193-4.

There is not a page in the eight volumes of sermons and lectures of Robertson that is not bathed in the light of Christian love and Christian knowledge. It is hard to part from him. It is difficult to resist transcribing all the golden words, "full of grace and truth," that proceeded out of his mouth. But his works are within the reach of all. Being dead he yet speaks, and will ever speak so long as there are ears to hear him; for not one among the prophets of England has borne truer witness to the principles of his Master, Christ, than has Frederick William Robertson.

CHAPTER XI.

J. W. DONALDSON—J. MACNAUGHT.

A TRULY bold champion of free thought and speech with regard to the Bible was JOHN WILLIAM DONALDSON (1812–1861).

Donaldson published in 1847 a work in Latin, purporting to reconstruct the lost Book of Jashar or Righteousness (referred to in Joshua x. 13 and 2 Samuel i. 18). He sought to do for the Scriptures “that which classical scholars, such as Welcker, Herman, Meinicker, and others have done for Æschylus, Alcasus, and the other lyricists, namely, to put together the scattered fragments of the offspring of the prophetic schools.”¹ Of the soundness of his scholarship it is for the learned to judge; to them he addressed himself, expressing a sovereign contempt for the “unskilled vulgar.” He was driven later to extend this contempt to many of the learned. It was perhaps a mistake to choose a dead language as a vehicle for communicating his researches to the world. In his more popular book, “Christian Orthodoxy Reconciled with the Conclusions of Modern Biblical Learning,”² he summarised his former work, and discussed the “gradual compilation of the Jewish collection of sacred books.” This, as he pointed out, terminated 250 years after the cessation,

¹ Book of Jashar, preface, Pp. viii.-ix.

² Published in 1857.

according to their own tradition, of the spirit of prophecy or inspiration. He boldly expressed his surprise that the "uncontrolled tendencies of the fallible judgments of one-sided, uncritical, and superstitious priests should be invested with the attributes of literary infallibility, and that this opinion should be maintained by any one in the nineteenth century."¹

The Book of Jashar or Righteousness he took to be the "first religious book of the Jews, the first offspring of the prophetic schools, which inaugurated their sacred literature; the nucleus of that theocratic history which, with a concretion of other materials more or less ancient, more or less religious, more or less intrinsically Divine, has been transmitted to us by the scribes and priests who returned from the Chaldean captivity and found that the language of the law and the prophets was no longer the living idiom of their native land."²

The Book of Jashar he held—

"Brings out in strong relief those features which the Jewish and Christian dispensations, being both Divine, must have in common. . . ."³

"We appeal confidently on behalf of our restoration of the Book of Jashar as a theory which, at all events, explains the existing phenomena; and those who revere the true Word of God—the revelation of the Divine will included and contained, and sometimes concealed, in the text of the Bible—must feel that in proportion as we have been successful, . . . in the same proportion must revealed truth gain an accession of distinct and authoritative significance."⁴

The primary "notion of the ancient Israelites" Donaldson understood to be "that God was jashar [or righteous];

¹ Christian Orthodoxy, pp. 191-2.

² Ibid., pp. 208-9.

³ Ibid., pp. 210-11.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 229-30.

and that it was the duty of man to become jashar like Him.”¹

By his book, “Christian Orthodoxy,” Donaldson hoped “like Aaron to take his stand between the living and the dead, and, by an offering of reconciliation, to stay the plague of unbelief which has for some time followed in the train of a dishonest bibliolatry.”²

His work he admitted to be “essentially controversial,” but only as “a protest against theological warfare and dogmatic intolerance.”³

“I can lay my hand upon my heart,” he said, “and declare that I regard with unfeigned toleration every opinion which I deem erroneous, except those which find their necessary expression in acts of unchristian malevolence.”⁴

Donaldson was earnest and constant in his endeavours to impress upon his readers that good conduct must be the outcome of sound faith, that righteousness is of more importance than doctrine, and that party-zeal, dogmatism and intolerance are fatal to moral growth. He blamed repeatedly and severely “the tendency to substitute dogma for duty, to become zealous adherents of some factious party instead of patient followers of Christ.”⁵

The two dogmas which he believed to be no longer tenable in the light of modern philosophy, and in no way essential to religion, were (1) the infallibility of Scripture, and (2) the existence of angels good and bad.

With regard to the first he held that—

“The whole of the inspired record is in the Bible, though

¹ Christian Orthodoxy, p. 211.

² Preface, p. vii.

³ Ibid., pp. x.-xi.

⁴ Ibid., p. xii.

⁵ P. 5.

the whole Bible is not the inspired record ; and that, though the Scriptures are truly called the Word of God, they do not possess in detail that sovereign authority and absolute certainty which would presume that their human authors are infallible.”¹

He claimed that—

“The message from God to man, which forms the link of connection between the Old and New Testaments, which is consistently delivered in the first no less than in the last pages of the Bible, is at once the proof of inspiration, namely, that a revelation has been given, and at the same time it is the substance of the revelation itself. Jesus has declared to us, in few words, what is the essential purport of the law which Moses preached, and which He came to restore, confirm, and purify. For in answer to the question, ‘Which is the great commandment of the law?’ He said, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’ Whatsoever is in accordance with these words, whatever illustrates their meaning or enforces their obligation, whether found in the Old Testament or in the New, is part of the revelation from God to man—and we can draw this spiritual food from almost every page: whatever is inconsistent with them, or does not speak their meaning, is not of God, but of man ; not of the body, but of the vestment ; not of the eternal, but of the temporal and transient ; not of the spirit which giveth life, but of the letter which killeth. . . . He whose heart is set on practical holiness is satisfied with learning and obeying the will of God. . . . He can walk in the garden of the Lord, and derive spiritual sustenance from the fruit of the tree of life, without thinking it necessary to feed on the boughs and foliage, or on the grass under his feet. . . . To him the Bible is a human composition, or rather a compila-

¹ Ibid., p. 189.

tion from literary fragments, but its theme and substance are Divine, for it tells how God manifests Himself, and declares His will to the beings into whom He had breathed a particle of His own Spirit.”¹

In an appendix, “On the Unchristian Spirit of Bibliolatry,” he cited several cases of gross intolerance and misrepresentation on the part of the so-called religious press and public, and concluded with the hope that this state of bigotry and uncharitableness would itself bring about a reaction :—

“It would indeed be a result of some importance if the misconduct of the bibliolatrous press were to awaken the true Protestants of England—the lovers of religious and intellectual freedom—to a due sense of the present need for united action in opposition to a tyranny more overbearing, and at the same time more degrading, than that of Rome. . . . The boasted respectability of the middle classes is becoming more and more a temple of untruth, and the artificial faith of the half-educated men of business is more and more dependent on the untenable assumptions of their teachers ; in this state of things we may welcome any extravagance, which, by shocking the good taste and better feelings of the age, will create a reaction, and so contribute to the overthrow of a practical or self-seeking dictatorship, or at least provoke a declared and indignant antagonism to the unchristian and illiberal spirit of bibliolatry.”²

“What can be more unwise,” he had said before, “than to say that all Christianity depends upon dogmas, theories, or assumptions, call them what you will, for which no man can be found to put forward an honest argument? We are told that speculations on these subjects are dangerous. To what? To the indestructible truth of God, or to some perishable fallacy of man?”³

¹ Ibid., pp. 175-8.

² P. 344.

³ P. 124.

“Christianity is a rule of life,” he urged, “and not a set of speculative opinions.”¹

With regard to the second dogma our author set himself to combat—viz., belief in good and bad angels—he held that the belief in “good angels is opposed to the doctrine of the ministration of the Spirit of God,” and “the belief in bad angels involves the monstrous fallacy that the pure Spirit of God . . . is capable of being corrupted without any corporeal or fleshly influences, and not only so, but capable of permanent depravity and wickedness.”²

Speaking of a divine who had sought to establish belief in the personality of the devil, Donaldson said he “belongs to the number of those who, in ignorant and foolish wilfulness, risk the safety of the citadel for the sake of an untenable outwork.”³

Though Donaldson opposed dogmatism and helped to destroy the authority of these two dogmas, he himself believed in several doctrines now thought irreconcilable with science and philosophy, and inclined to consider one or two speculative matters essential to Christian orthodoxy and Church membership.

For instance, he emphatically asserted “that we have all the evidence which history can furnish—more evidence than can be found for any occurrences of that age—to support the belief that miracles and mighty signs were wrought by the first Founder of our religion.”⁴

Again, he held Christian orthodoxy to be that Jesus Christ is “the Son of the living God, and . . . therefore a Divine Person,” but also that, “as a safeguard against the prevalent error of professing Christians, we must stig-

¹ Ibid., p. 37.

² Pp. 348-9.

³ P. 398.

⁴ Pp. 111-12.

matise as anti-Christian all those who will not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, all those who do not fully admit Christ's absolute humanity."¹

He firmly held, and desired to see more fully recognised, "that Christian orthodoxy and Anglican or national orthodoxy are co-extensive."² The Church of England requiring only belief in the Trinity, shown in obedience to the law of God, *i.e.*, in good conduct.³

Speaking of the English minister, he claimed for him full liberty as a prophet of God.

"It has not generally been observed that his liberty of private judgment is maintained even by his ordination vow, and that he accepts the rule of faith with that latitude of interpretation which is always presumed in the professional study of a document. . . . Now the priest and bishop not only accept the Scriptures as the exclusive rule of faith, but bind themselves by a promise that they will exercise an independent judgment in regard to the doctrines which they derive from the canonical books. . . . We have already seen that the Articles refer every doctrine to Scripture, with the exception of that belief in the Trinity which is the foundation of the Catholic faith. If, then, the Church does not tell us what doctrines we must find in Scripture, if she expressly relinquishes the privilege of affixing arbitrary interpretations to isolated texts, if she requires from her ordained priests and consecrated bishops that they will be guided by their own consciences in their conclusions from the text of Scripture, it is clear that the Anglican minister is not only not precluded from the enjoyment of that liberty which is an indication of the Spirit's presence, but that he is bound on all occasions both to exercise and assert his freedom."⁴

Donaldson's writings are certainly remarkable, espe-

¹ Ibid., p. 409. ² P. 402. ³ See pp. 419 and 460. ⁴ Pp. 448-9.

cially when the general state of Biblical criticism and culture in his time is taken into account. It seems indeed a pity that his reconstruction of the Book of Jashar should be so completely ignored and forgotten.

Among the minor English prophets of the nineteenth century there has not been one bolder than John MacNaught. His "Enquiry Concerning the Infallibility, Inspiration, and Authority of Holy Writ," published in 1856, was the first distinct and deliberate avowal of the fallibility of the Bible, alike in science, history, morals, and religion.

The tone of the book is throughout spiritual and religious. The author sought to establish truth, not to overthrow it. He claimed to be able to believe in the Trinity, the Incarnation, and so forth, in spite of his Biblical heresies.

"Through this inquiry concerning inspiration he hoped that faith, instead of being overthrown, would be restored and confirmed ; inasmuch as those proofs of it which were irreconcilable with reason will have been got rid of, and faith and reason will have been brought into harmonious action for the upholding of Christian truth."¹

He urged that this "Enquiry" should promote peace rather than discord :—

"If . . . we can only know in part, and not infallibly, then we should all be very humble and very patient in the prosecution of knowledge for ourselves, and in the endeavour to impart to others, what we think we know. Hence humility and charity should, and to a certain extent will, arise naturally from the consciousness that God alone is to be conceived as infallible, and that all we and ours are more or less fallible."²

¹ P. 8.

² P. 11.

He concluded, after careful consideration, that his views were not inconsistent with the Act of Uniformity, or with the form of subscription to the Articles, and that consequently he was not bound to leave the Church of England, but rather to stay and enlighten others. Almost the last words of his book bear upon this subject:—

“From some of us, my brethren, lay and clerical—would to God it may be said from all—the dream of an infallible Book has passed as thoroughly away as ever melted from before the eyes of Luther the mist-cloud of an infallible Pope, or, as ever vanished from a man who had learned to know his his own heart, the notion of an infallible self.”¹

As to the question of the expediency of avowing the results of his studies, he said fearlessly:—

“Can it be our duty to lie for God? Ought we to uphold anything which we know to be untrue, for the sake of results which we hope will accrue to us and to the world from its upholding? Is not God great and good enough to take care of His own cause, which, in Christianity as in all things, is the cause of truth? . . .

“What, we may well inquire, would now have been our position, and that of all mankind, if a regard to consequences had prevented Jesus and His apostles from divulging at the peril and price of their lives, insisting on those truths which were not inaptly described as ‘turning the world upside down’? . . . Did not Jesus so come as not to bring peace but a sword into this evil world? If Wickliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin,—nay, if Galileo, Harvey, Jenner, or any man who has had any tidings startling and troublesome but profitable to communicate, had taken warning and desisted from consideration of consequences to himself in the way of obloquy and martyrdom, or to the world in the way of amazement and revolution, where would the improvements of modern civilisation and the blessings of the Gospel of salvation now be buried

¹ P. 315.

and lost? . . . Arguments from consequences should make every prudent, and still more every pious, man anxiously reflect on the certainty of what he has to tell and on the importance of its truth being made known. But when once the supposed consequences have so operated on our minds, they have done their proper work; and he who, from a regard to these considerations, conceals important truth, is putting his light under a bushel, failing to be the salt of the earth, and falling under the condemnation, 'Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.'"¹

The book is shrewd, pithy, and moreover thoroughly candid in tone. It is not profoundly learned, nor does it attempt to compare biblical assertions with scientific truths, for the simple reason that even these may not yet be fully ascertained, nor are they always within the grasp of the general reader to whom it is addressed. The author judged the Bible by itself, and showed that it made no pretensions to infallibility; its "inspired penmen" nowhere "pronouncing their own *writings* inspired;"² and that it contains many self-contradictory and irreligious statements. He dared even to say that the story of Jael, the imprecations of Isaiah, the Psalmist, and of Paul, "in spirit as well as in letter," are "direct contradictions of Him who said, 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you,' and who for His time-serving and unrighteous crucifiers prayed, saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'"³

In admitting the chronological and moral defects of the Scriptures he held that the influence of the Holy Spirit is none the less evident in them:—

¹ Pp. 161-3.

² P. 189.

³ P. 69.

"We are firmly convinced that the writers of Holy Scripture were inspired, and that their writings are the reflex of their own inspired minds and thoughts; and thus we most distinctly avow our belief in the inspiration of the Bible. But, as has been seen, we are assured that there is no connection whatever between infallibility and inspiration."¹

"Must we not," he said, alluding to the proposed sacrifice of Isaac, the slaughter of the Amalekites, the vow of Jephtha, and such like, "at the same time see that against every immorality or impiety Scripture raises its own voice? Does not the Bible itself teach, in some part or other of its own scheme, and especially in the New Testament Scriptures, such pure lessons of love, usefulness and piety as supply a thorough antidote against the utmost acknowledged error which may be contained in its darker pages?"² . . .

"The first characteristic excellence of the Bible," he continued, "is its inculcating the practice of eclecticism.

. . . Only once say, home to a man's heart and understanding, 'You are your own judge: God's vicegerent conscience is within you: *judge for yourself*'—once say this so that a man shall hear it, and he is for ever afterwards God's freeman. You may by *reason* convince his judgment, and so convert or change his views: but by *authority*, of priest or Church or book, you can never again guide his mind. . . .

"Scripture . . . appeals to us as wise men who can judge and ought to act on our own judgment in rejecting what is evil, though an angel should be its teacher, and in holding fast the good, which we approve, whencesoever we may have derived it and whatsoever it may be."

Besides this examination into the claims of Scriptural authority, J. MacNaught published in 1878 an elaborate treatise on the Eucharist, called "*Cæna Domini*." In this he showed the gradual elaboration during the Middle

¹ P. 168.

² Pp. 259-60.

³ P. 262.

Ages of the original simple service, and the unmistakable endeavours of the English Church at the Reformation to return to that primitive simplicity. The book was directed against the High Church party, and is moderate and liberal rather than broad in tone.

“The history of the English Prayer Book,” he said, “and of its liturgy, is a striking example and illustration of the principle that Holy Writ is, under God and with conscience, the highest appeal, not only for less weighty matters as those of ritual, but for the far weightier matters of doctrine and truth, of which, confessedly, ritual is but the trapping and the sign.

“Unless we have learnt from Holy Writ that, in the Sacrament, as in all Christian life and worship, the letter killeth and only the spirit giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing, but only the words and spirit of Christ are truth and are life, vain indeed has been our effort. However, we hope and pray for better things; and so we commend this essay to the patient study of the reader, and to the mercy of Almighty God in our Saviour Christ.”¹

MacNaught, whether from lack of ambition, from such indifference to dogma that he did not even care to attack it, or from general orthodoxy on all other matters than that of the infallibility of Scripture, did not again enter the arena of controversy. Both in his life and in his sermons he continued to teach Christian charity and liberality until his death in 1890.

¹ *Cæna Domini*, pp. 427-9.

CHAPTER XII.

"ESSAYS AND REVIEWS."—BADEN POWELL—H. B. WILSON—ROWLAND WILLIAMS—MARK PATTISON.

IN 1861 great excitement was caused in the religious world by the publication of a volume called "Essays and Reviews," by seven writers. Bishops and priests declaimed against it in their charges and sermons; the religious newspapers poured forth torrents of more or less incoherent and ignorant abuse, the wildest extravagances of language being indulged in; the authors were called "the seven extinguishers of the seven lamps of the Apocalypse," "the seven champions not of Christendom," and the "Septem contra Christum." Memorials protesting against the opinions and tendencies of the writers were largely signed. The Houses of Convocation condemned it with even more than their general average of prejudice, bigotry, and ignorance. The Upper House first censured the book, which "they claimed the privilege of never having read," and then appointed a committee to examine it! Notwithstanding the brave protests of Deans Trench, Milman, Alford, Liddell, Hook, and Goodwin, and of Dr. Williams, Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, against this unmanly and unchristian proceeding, the Lower House thanked the Upper for its decision.

"Essays and Reviews" was rather an epoch-marking than an epoch-making book. Hereby the Church of England was able to show some real progress in liberalism.

Of the seven writers, four only come within the compass of this work; for one was a layman, and two are still alive; and of these two one has long since recanted all connection with the fatal volume and the Broad Church party, but the other still fights in the van of progress.

BADEN POWELL (1796-1860), before contributing to "Essays and Reviews," had published two or three works on philosophy and religion, characterised by a candid, scientific, and yet devout spirit. For instance, speaking of the creation, he said:—

"Science demonstrates incessant changes, and dimly points to yet earlier links in a more vast series of developments of material existence, but the idea of a *beginning*, or of *creation*, in the sense of the original operation of the Divine volition to constitute nature and matter, is beyond the province of *physical philosophy*, and can only belong to that of *faith* and find expression in the language of *inspiration*."¹

Two years later he frankly admitted the mistake of attempting to reconcile geology with Genesis "by an artful contexture of plausible misrepresentations."²

He went on to say that—

"Of all the consequences of this literal bibliolatry, and of all the forms in which it has shown itself, one of the most pernicious in the results, as well as the most preposterous in its nature, has been the practice of looking to the Bible not only as a standard of religion, but as an equal authority on all

¹ Spirit of Inductive Philosophy (1855), p. 480.

² Christianity without Judaism, p. 39.

subjects—social, political, chronological, historical, philosophical—and as the guide not merely to religious but to scientific truth.”¹

“The inevitable rejection of the historical character of the Mosaic narrative—a character so strenuously insisted on under old systems—cannot but be regarded as a marked feature in the theological and spiritual advance of the present age. It is not a step which can be denied, retracted, or obliterated; it is a substantial position gained and retained, and from which the advancing inquirer cannot be dislodged. And the more it is reflected on, and its consequences fairly appreciated and followed out, the more—I do not hesitate to express my opinion—will it be acknowledged as the characteristic feature and commencement of a great revolution in theological views.”²

He combated the conventional Sabbath doctrine, saying that with the geological refutation of the six days’ creation theory, the “historical character of the distinction conferred on the seventh falls to the ground.”³ And he went on to protest against the real danger to morality and Christianity of this notion of relegating religious duties to certain fixed periods or days:—

“Those who are not religious *habitually* will not be so *occasionally*; those who do not keep up *continual* holiness will seek *periodical* sanctity. Those who do not make their *lives* holy can punctiliously keep *days* holy. It is easier to sanctify times and places than our hearts; human nature clings to religious formalism, and especially to Sabbatarianism, as an easy mode of compounding for a worldly, if not irreligious life.

“ . . . We must recollect that the real question is *one of principle*, and the view here taken of it leads to the condemnation of a Judaical, unevangelical formalism—the unhappy and superstitious misconception *that it is sinful to do on a Sunday anything which it is not sinful to do on another day.*

¹ Christianity without Judaism, p. 54.

² Ibid., pp. 64–5.

³ Ibid., pp. 88–9.

"If there be one cause more than another to which the common miserably low sense of Christian morality may be traced, we may without hesitation ascribe it to the vulgar adoption of the mere text of the Jewish Decalogue, unaccompanied by any Christian interpretation." ¹

His contribution to "Essays and Reviews" was "On the Study of Christian Evidences." In this he argued against the popular notion that the high questions of religion should be investigated "rather with our affections than with our logic, . . . with a desire to find the doctrines true. . . . Suggestions," he said, "which, however good in a *moral* and *practical* sense, are surely inapplicable if it be made a question of *facts*." ² He blamed the "good earnest men" who "become alarmed for the *dangerous* consequences they think likely to result from certain speculations on these subjects, . . . and thus a disposition has been encouraged to regard any such question as one of *right or wrong* rather than one of *truth or error*; to treat all objections as profane, and to discard exceptions unanswered as shocking and immoral." ³

He was careful to point out how all arguments concerning evidences must be rational and critical, that refuge cannot be taken in supernatural assumptions and the like. "Testimony," he said, "can only prove an extraordinary and perhaps inexplicable occurrence or phenomenon; that it is due to supernatural causes is entirely dependent on the previous belief and assumption of the parties." He went on to show how, in the present day, to any one "at all versed in physical studies," any extraordinary and unaccountable fact would be ascribed with-

¹ Christianity without Judaism, pp. 187-91.

² Essays and Reviews, p. 98.

³ Ibid., pp. 99-100.

out an instant of doubt "to some natural cause," of which the explanation might later on be expected "by the advance of discovery."¹ "The boundaries of nature," he said, "exist only where our present knowledge places them; the discoveries of to-morrow will alter and enlarge them."²

He blamed "the champions of the 'evidences' of Christianity" for regarding a miracle as an *exceptional case*; and reminded them that hereby the "*historical* character of the narrative" is forfeited, or at least tampered with; and those who would shield it from the criticism to which history and fact are necessarily amenable cannot in consistency be offended at the alternative involved of a more or less mythical interpretation."³

Referring to Deuteronomy xiii. 1-3, and to Galatians i. 8, where command is given to disregard a prophet working signs and wonders, or even an angel from heaven who preaches contrary to the truth, he said:—

"According to this view, the main ground of the admissibility of external attestations is the worthiness of their object—their doctrine. . . .

"This has indeed been the common argument of the most approved divines. . . . Yet what is it but to acknowledge the right of appeal, superior to that of all miracles, to our own moral tribunal, to the principle that the human mind is competent to sit in moral and spiritual judgment on a professed revelation!"⁴

"The more knowledge advances, the more it has been and will be acknowledged that Christianity, as a real religion, must be viewed apart from connection with physical things."⁵

He said bravely of miracles that if, "in the estimation of a former age," they were "among the chief *supports* of

¹ Essays and Reviews, p. 107. ² Ibid., p. 109. ³ Ibid., pp. 110-11.

⁴ Ibid., p. 122.

⁵ Ibid., p. 128.

Christianity, they are at present among the main *difficulties* and hindrances to its acceptance.”¹

He summed up the case against miracles very neatly as follows :—

“The case, indeed, of the *antecedent* argument against miracles is very clear, however little some are inclined to perceive it. In nature and from nature, by science and by reason, we neither have nor can possibly have any evidence of a *Deity working miracles* ; for that we must go out of nature and beyond science. If we could have any such evidence *from nature*, it would only prove extraordinary *natural* effects, which would not be *miracles* in the old theological sense, as isolated, unrelated, uncaused ; whereas no *physical* fact can be conceived as unique, or without analogy and relation to others, and to the whole system of natural causes.”²

He had the courage to accept Darwin’s theory of the origin of species by natural selection, and to predict the “entire revolution of opinion” his work “must soon bring about . . . in favour of the grand principle of the self-evolving powers of nature.”³

Baden Powell died the same year in which the “Essays” were published. He would doubtless have received the honourable distinction of prosecution with his two equally outspoken and hardy associates—H. B. Wilson and Rowland Williams. He was said to have been on the point of leaving the Church, but this was emphatically contradicted by his friends, and is disproved by the fact that he had, shortly before his death, applied for the Bampton Lectureship.

Another of the famous essayists was H. B. WILSON

¹ Essays and Reviews, p. 140. ² Ibid., pp. 141–2. ³ Ibid., p. 139.

(1803-1887). Before contributing to "Essays and Reviews" he had been Bampton Lecturer (in 1851), and had published other lectures and sermons. His chief endeavour throughout his writings was to promote the unity of Christendom in general and of the English Church in particular. His Bampton Lectures on "The Communion of Saints, an attempt to illustrate the true principle of Christian union," show that he held the basis of Christianity to be moral rather than dogmatic.

He divided the intellectual tendency of Christianity into two chief divisions—namely, the historical and the philosophical—neither of which he held "can be universally agreed upon, nor universally accepted by all Christian societies, and by all members of such societies."¹

"... That either positive dogma or negation of dogma should be absolutely final and for ever fixed," he said, "is inconsistent with man's condition as a progressive being; that a statement of dogma should be provisional, suspended upon the attainment of further light, or upon the improvement of our faculties of judging is perfectly consistent with it."²

Of the inevitableness of Scripture criticism he was persuaded:—

"The words of Scripture itself, when they relate to such things as are subjects of human observation, such things as are subjects of human speculation, or are capable of being verified by human experience, are evidences, not of the absolute objective truth, but of the modes of thinking and speaking, and of the limits of understanding of a certain age. And this observation must apply as well to the moral and intellectual as to the material."³

He carefully contrasted the universal authority of the

¹ Bampton Lectures, pp. 41-2.

² Ibid., pp. 74-5.

³ Ibid., pp. 123-4.

moral sense—not of course “in all cases excited by precisely the same objects or acts,”—with the impossibility of entire agreement upon a dogmatic statement, of “unity of judgment as to an abstract truth lying beyond all experience and verification,” or even of “unity of opinion concerning the features of historical facts.”¹

He took pains thus to show the difference between faith in a principle and faith in a doctrine :—

“In conclusion, the unity of moral disposition and of moral purpose, which has in fact made all sincere followers of Christ one, in all times and in all Churches, has and does traverse their differences, not as a generalisation from them ; without superseding, or tending directly to supersede, their several needs and special constitutions, unless it be where they are essentially exclusive and damnatory. But this unity must itself be founded on some faith, some faith common to all Christians, some faith capable of being received, without difference, by all men.

“For in making the identity of their disposition and purpose, rather than their dogmatic faith, than their historical faith, than their feelings, than the supernatural influences in which they believe, than their worship, or than their formal virtue, the true Catholic character—this moral purpose, wherever permanent, must imply an habitual will ; there is fixed faith and conviction, fixed faith and conviction of some good within reach. It is a fixed faith in the supremacy and victory of good over evil. This faith has never been wanting to the true Christian, nor, in degree, to the true believer, from the earliest time.”²

In 1857 H. B. Wilson contributed to “Oxford Essays” a paper on “Schemes for Christian Comprehension,” in which he further and more specially developed, and illus-

¹ Bampton Lectures, pp. 186-9.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 278-9.

trated from history, the lesson he had sought to convey in his Bampton Lectures.

"It has been a misleading notion," he wrote, "that an intellectual certitude, or some spiritual gift equivalent to an intellectual or demonstrative certitude, must be at the basis of the fundamental doctrines."¹

Here again he argued that it is really "the question of probabilities," which belonging "necessarily to the interpretation of Scripture, crops out, as it were, even from under the creeds and confessions which lie over it. . . .

"All dogmatic statements must be held to be modalised by greater or less probability. For the doctrines of Christianity rest upon a number of historical documents, and these documents come to us like any other collection of historical documents."²

Taking doctrine to be only equal to "probable opinion," he urged men "to respect one another's opinions, and to give each other credit for having honestly arrived at them."³ And, further, that having granted such "mental recognition to be possible between Christians, . . . the like principles will enable a large comprehension of individual opinion under the same confession."⁴

H. B. Wilson's contribution to "Essays and Reviews" was on "The National Church." In this he reiterated his arguments that the Catholic Church, and consequently all national Churches, should be based on morality and not on doctrine. For instance, he argued that although our Lord "expressly taught a resurrection, He never treated the Sadducees as aliens from Israel because they did not

¹ Oxford Essays, vol. iii. p. 113.

³ Ibid., p. 126.

² Ibid., p. 114.

⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

hold that doctrine," and "is much more severe on the moral defects and hypocrisies of the Pharisees than upon the doctrinal defects of the Sadducees." And that likewise St. Paul never expelled Christian Sadducees from the Church, "although he always represents faith in the resurrection as the corner-stone of the Christian belief."¹

"If the national Church is to be true to the multitudinist principle," he urged, "and to correspond ultimately to the national character, the freedom of opinion which belongs to the English citizen should be conceded to the English Churchman; and the freedom which is already practically enjoyed by the members of the congregation cannot, without injustice, be denied to its ministers."²

He was anxious to have the act of subscription to the Articles abolished, not only for the relief of the clergy, and the increase of strength to the Church by the admission of conscientious and able Nonconformists, but to cause to "disappear the invidious distinction between the clergy and laity of the same communion, as if there were separate standards for each of belief and morals."³

The following words are well worth the consideration of those who would split the national Church into a number of sects, and who advocate the unpatriotic principle of separating from the Establishment for a mere difference of opinion:—

" . . . The service of the national Church may well be regarded in a different light from the service of a sect. It is as properly an organ of the national life as a magistracy or a legislative estate. To set barriers before the entrance upon its functions, by limitations not absolutely required by public

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 162-3.

² Ibid., p. 178.

³ Ibid., p. 189.

policy, is to infringe upon the birthright of the citizens. And to lay down, as an alternative to striving for more liberty of thought and expression within the Church of the nation, that those also who are dissatisfied may sever themselves and join a sect, would be paralleled by declaring to political reformers that they are welcome to expatriate themselves if they desire any change in the existing forms of the constitution. The suggestion of the alternative is an insult; if it could be enforced, it would be a grievous wrong.”¹

Consequently he held that a national Church must not be dogmatic, but moral:—

“It cannot concern a State to develop as part of its own organisation a machinery or system of relations founded on the possession of speculative truths. Speculative doctrines should be left to philosophic schools. A national Church must be concerned with the ethical development of its members.”²

Incidentally in his essay Wilson propounded the two heresies for which he was subsequently tried, viz., that of the possible salvation of the heathen, and the uninspired nature of parts of Scripture.

Of the former he said:—

“As to the necessity of faith in a Saviour to these peoples [the heathen, &c.] when they could never have had it, no one, upon reflection, can believe in any such thing; doubtless they will be equitably dealt with. And when we hear fine distinctions drawn between covenanted and uncovenanted mercies, it seems either to be a distinction without a difference or to amount to a denial of the broad and equal justice of the Supreme Being. We cannot be content to wrap the question up, and leave it for a mystery, as to what shall become of those myriads upon myriads of non-Christian races. First, if our traditions tell us that they are involved in the curse of Adam . . . we are disposed to think that our traditions

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 190-1.

² Ibid., p. 195.

cannot herein fairly declare to us the words and inferences from Scripture; but if, on examination, it should turn out that they have, we must say that the authors of the Scriptural books have, in these matters, represented to us their own inadequate conceptions, and not the mind of the Spirit of God; for we must conclude with the Apostle, 'Yea, let God be true and every man a liar.'"¹

With respect to the latter, he spoke of the "Word of God" as being—

"A phrase which begs many questions when applied collectively to the books of the Old and New Testaments, a phrase which is never so applied to them by any of the Scriptural authors, and which, according to Protestant principles, never could be applied to them by any sufficient authority from without. In that which may be considered the first Article of the Church, this expression does not occur, but only 'Holy Scripture,' 'Canonical Books,' 'Old and New Testaments.' It contains no declaration of the Bible being throughout supernaturally suggested, nor any intimation as to which portions of it were owing to a special Divine illumination, nor the slightest attempt at defining inspiration, whether mediately or immediately, whether through or beside or overruling the natural faculties of the subject of it—not the least hint of the relation between the Divine and human elements in the composition of the biblical books."

Under the terms of the 6th Article he claimed that "one may accept literally or allegorically, or as parable, or poetry, or legend, the story of a serpent-tempter, of an ass speaking with a man's voice, of an arresting of the earth's motion, of a reversal of its motion, of waters standing in a solid heap, of witches, of a variety of apparitions. . . So the dates and authorship of the several books received as canonical are not determined by any authority, nor their relative value and importance.

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 153-4.

"Many evils," he added, "have flowed to the people of England, otherwise free enough, from an extreme and too exclusive Scripturalism."¹

"Good men—and they cannot be good without the Spirit of God—may err in facts, be weak in memory, be feeble in inferences, confound illustration with argument, be varying in judgment and in opinion. But the Spirit of absolute truth cannot err or contradict Himself, if He speaks immediately, even in small things, accessories, and accidents. Still less can we suppose Him to suggest contradictory accounts only to be reconciled in the way of hypothesis and conjecture. . . . To suppose . . . a supernatural influence which can only issue in a puzzle is to lower infinitely our conceptions of the Divine dealings in respect of a special revelation."²

ROWLAND WILLIAMS (1817–1870) published in 1855 a collection of sermons on "Rational Godliness," which called forth some censure at the time, Dr. Thirlwall, his diocesan bishop, being urged to interfere. This, however, he said he would not do, even if he could. These sermons are not so bold as Wilson's writings, or even as Baden Powell's, but are nevertheless fairly coloured by liberal thought. They are perfectly orthodox in most respects. *E.g.*, their author believed in the ordinary doctrine of the Incarnation, in the eternity of future punishment, and the like. He almost admitted, however, that salvation is determined by conduct alone; for, after maintaining that the doctrines concerning the nature of God, of the Holy Ghost, &c., as set forth in the creeds, are naturally and readily deducible from the teaching of our Lord, he added—

"Here permit me to remind you that no man is really better or worse for framing his religion into formal propositions. It

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 175–7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

is not by doing so that he is saved. Only, as it is clear from the theorising tendency of the human intellect that such propositions will in some shape be formed, it may become indirectly a matter of importance that they should be formed correctly. They must not be of such a kind as to neutralise or make void the facts of our faith. We are ready to admit that the doctrine of the Trinity, in the particular aspect in which it is laid down in the creed called Athanasian, is the technical or logical side of the Christian scheme, . . . and as for any plain person, who in the simplicity of his heart may bungle over reasoning of this kind, we feel as much doubt of his perishing everlastingly as we do that the weary infant falling asleep in its mother's arms will have its brains dashed out by her because she is displeased with some unconscious murmur in its dreams." Nevertheless, he could not understand a theologian rejecting this creed without at the same time "denying the Lord that bought him, and forsaking the faith of the holy Church of Christ."¹

That he was not at all fully persuaded of the truth of the ordinary acceptation of faith as being mere belief in doctrine is shown in such passages as these :—

"A man's religion, after all, seems not to consist so much in what he does from a demonstration that Christ can reward him, as in what he does out of love, for the very work's sake."²

" . . . However true it may be that our religion is in its essence attachment to Christ as a Person, this can never mean to His name, or to His power, as if He were jealous or arbitrary, but rather to that goodness and that truth which He embodies, and which commend themselves by their excellence to the faith of the pure in heart."³

It seems clear that Rowland Williams would have had no opinion of any man's faith that was not shown in good works, and would have looked first to his works and then

¹ Rational Godliness, pp. 249-50.

² P. 282.

³ P. 395.

to his faith; also, that he took the affections and emotions as more productive of good works than accurate formulæ and logical creeds.

His main heresy, however, concerned the authority of Scripture. He asked leave in these sermons, "in all humility to protest against that unwise exaggeration which makes the entire Bible a transcript of the Divine omniscience, or a Word of God for all time, without due reference to the circumstances and to the range of knowledge of these holy men who spoke of old."¹

He ventured also to doubt "whether those teachers should be followed who assert the physical frame of the world to be actually disorganised by the fall of man."²

He said, again:—

"We may read Moses, not for his physical geography, but for his ten commandments and his history. We may read the book of Joshua, not for its astronomy, but for a tremendous example of the law by which God sweeps corrupt nations from the earth. We may find in Kings and Chronicles, not imaginary and faultless men, but subjects of Divine providence, instances of Divine teaching, and all that blending of interest with instruction which the history of a devout people, told with reference to the Judge of the whole earth, is ever calculated to afford."³

"A man may know his Bible by heart, and yet be deaf to the Word of God. He may lay stress on temporary accidents; . . . may be blind to eternal principles, such as faith, hope, charity. . . . Thus our religion is one thing and the books which record it are another."⁴

The Scriptures he spoke of as "a history of religion," which he defined as "the aspiration of the human heart

¹ Rational Godliness, p. 293.

² Ibid., p. 125.

³ Ibid., pp. 297-8.

⁴ Ibid., p. 303.

to its Creator;"¹ he urged that "one of the principal reasons for which Scripture was written was "to teach the eternal difference between right and wrong."²

He believed that "by the Spirit of God" not only "the ancient heroes founded kingdoms, and legislators devised laws," but also that by it Columbus discovered the new world, and Bacon, Newton, and Milton wrote."³

"We may grant," he said, "to the Romanists, as to many Anglicans, that the Church was before the Bible, as a speaker is before his voice, and that the Holy Scripture is not the foundation of the Christian faith so much as its creature, its expression, and its embodiment. . . . The two things from which Scripture sprung are for ever in the world—I mean the conscience of men and the Holy Spirit of God. From these two meeting in the Church the Bible derives its origin, its authority, and its power to persuade.

"I exhort, therefore, every soul that hears me to value highly the Bible; to read it, pray over it, understand it. But beware of lying for God, of ascribing infallibility to men of like passions with ourselves, or of sacrificing the spirit which enlivens to the letter which deadens."⁴

He believed in the continual presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, and therefore boldly asserted that—

"Most persons, if they reflected, would acknowledge that Thomas à Kempis and Leighton are more wholesome reading than the Song of Solomon. But why," he asked, "should they not be so? If Jesus Christ has improved the world, and His Church is better than the ancient Jerusalem, the indwelling Spirit, being better, must speak better words. These things are so evident that they would never be denied but for the assumption of inspiration's meaning dictation, and the fear of supposed evil consequences."⁵

¹ Rational Godliness, p. 49.

² Ibid., p. 52.

³ Ibid., pp. 217-8.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 309-10.

⁵ Ibid., note, pp. 398-9.

He was also somewhat advanced on the question of miracles, though perhaps not quite so much as Baden Powell. He said that to "believe the miracles for the sake of the doctrines is a more truly Christian" proceeding "than the reverse."¹ "But where then, some will ask, are our evidences? It may be answered in two words; the character of Christ and the doctrine of Christ."²

In his article on Bunsen's "Biblical Researches," in "Essays and Reviews," Williams adopted many of his author's conclusions, especially such as that in—"The Bible as an expression of devout reason, and therefore to be read with reason and freedom, he [Bunsen] finds record of the spiritual giants whose experience generated the religious atmosphere we breathe."³

He warmly commended his author for "accepting frankly the belief of scholars, and yet not despairing of Hebrew prophecy as a witness to the kingdom of God."⁴

"The great result of such inquiries," he said, "is to indicate the work of the Eternal Spirit, that abiding influence which, as our Church teaches us in the ordination service, underlies all others, and in which converge all images of old times and means of grace now."⁵

He also adopted the Chevalier's interpretation of St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith as being "the peace of mind or sense of Divine approbation which comes of trust in a righteous God rather than a fiction of merit by transfer. St. Paul," he added, "would then be teaching moral responsibility as opposed to sacerdotalism, or that to obey is better than sacrifice." This view, he hoped,

¹ Rational Godliness, p. 392.

³ Essays and Reviews, p. 60.

² Ibid., p. 394.

⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 77, &c.

might reconcile natural and revealed theology ; which, he said, " would be like awaking from a dream of our nearest kindred being in irreconcilable combat." ¹

Rowland Williams and H. B. Wilson were tried for heresy before the Court of Arches, and afterwards, on appeal, before the Privy Council in 1862-3.

Though Dr. Lushington, in the first Court, condemned them on three charges respectively, he acquitted them on some others, pronouncing on the claims of Holy Writ the following memorable judgment :—

Referring to Williams' argument for the necessity of a verifying faculty in man, he asked, " What is the true meaning of these words? I apprehend it must mean this : that the clergy (for I speak of these only) are at liberty to reject parts of Scripture upon their own opinion that the narrative is inherently incredible, to disregard precepts in Holy Writ because they think they are evidently wrong. Whatever I may think as to the danger of the liberty so claimed, still if the liberty do not extend to the impugning of the Articles of Religion or the Formularies, the matter is beyond my cognisance."

By this the decision of the Gorham case was re-affirmed, that the clergy of the Church of England are not judged by the Bible, but by the Articles and Formularies based upon the Bible. These words have been truly called the " Magna Charta " of the English Church. They did not create her liberty, but declared and secured it.

Similarly, in his judgment on H. B. Wilson, he said :—
" Provided the canonicity [of the books of Scripture] be not impeached, and provided the clergyman does not apply

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 80-1.

his mode of interpretation so as to reject any of the particular dogmas enforced in the Articles," he has not committed heresy. "I see," he added, "to what fearful consequences this doctrine may be carried; but, provided that the Articles and Formularies are not contravened, the law lays down no limits of construction, no rule of interpretation for the Scriptures."

Again, with regard to the authorship of the Book of Daniel in the case of Williams, and of the Second Epistle attributed to St. Peter in the case of Wilson, Dr. Lushington said that doubts as to the authorship of the sacred books are quite permissible so long as their canonicity be not denied—*i.e.*, so long as it is not denied that they were "written under Divine guidance—the essential condition of canonicity."

The judgment of the Privy Council reversed the sentence of deprivation pronounced by the Court below on the charges retained by the Dean. Rowland Williams had been condemned for speaking of the Bible as "an expression of devout reason," and also of the "fiction of merit by transfer," with respect to the doctrine of justification. H. B. Wilson had been condemned for saying "that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were not written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, nor necessarily at all, and certainly not in parts, the Word of God." Also for expressing a hope that the future punishment of those who had never heard of Christ might not be everlasting.

Lord Westbury's judgment hereon contained some notable points. For example, respecting the plenary or verbal inspiration of Scripture he said:—

"We are confined . . . to the question whether in them [the Articles] the Church has affirmed that every part of the book of Scripture was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and is the Word of God.

"Certainly this doctrine is not involved in the statement of the sixth Article, that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation. But inasmuch as it does so from the revelations of the Holy Spirit, the Bible may well be denominated 'Holy,' and be said to be 'the Word of God,' 'God's Word written,' or 'Holy Writ,' terms which cannot be affirmed to be clearly predicated of every statement and representation contained in every part of the Old and New Testaments.

"The framers of the Articles have not used the word 'inspiration' as applied to the Holy Scriptures; nor have they laid down anything as to the nature, extent, or limits of that operation of the Holy Spirit."

It may be remarked that in the judgment on this point no notice is taken of Rowland Williams' theory that the clergy have by *ordination* the power to discern between the spirit and the letter of the Bible. The "devout reason" of a man, whether ordained or not, is ruled to be sufficient, according to the teaching of the Church of England, for the interpretation of Scripture.

H. B. Wilson was also acquitted of heresy for expressing a *hope* that punishment may not be eternal. Lord Westbury said:—

"We are not required or at liberty to express any opinion upon the mysterious question of the eternity of final punishment, further than to say that we do not find in the Formularies . . . any such distinct declaration of our Church upon the subject as requires us to condemn as penal the expression of hope by a clergyman that even the ultimate pardon of the wicked, who are condemned in the day of judgment, may be consistent with the will of Almighty God."

It is curious that the extent of this verdict should have remained for so many years almost entirely unheeded. It is true that a certain number of the clergy and laity protested at the time against this and the other rulings of the Privy Council, and proclaimed their belief in the verbal inspiration of Scripture, and their certainty of the everlasting punishment not only of all who had rejected Christ, but of those who had not even heard of Him. Their protests and assertions were, however, only of individual weight, and had as little to do with the body of Church doctrine as if some extreme Radicals were to declare England even now a republic. Had the full significance of the judgment been understood, much of the animosity on the one hand, and of the sense of martyrdom on the other, occasioned by the recent publication of some sermons expressive only of a *hope* on this great subject, would have been avoided. In contrast to this it is delightful to learn that at least one distinguished nonconformist—the late Dr. Ross—entered the English Church in consequence of this very judgment.¹

MARK PATTISON (1813-1884), afterwards Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, contributed an almost orthodox essay, "On the Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750," to the fatal volume. It is true he expressed regret that "honest critical inquiry into the origin and composition of the canonical writings" should not have been more pursued in England,² and speaking of

¹ A full account of this famous trial will be found in Broderick and Fremantle's *Ecclesiastical Judgments of the Privy Council*, pp. 247-290.

² *Essays and Reviews*, p. 263.

argumentative proof, said that the fact "that such knowledge is possible can never be substituted for the knowledge without detriment to the mental habit. What is true of an individual is true of an age. When an age is found occupied in proving its creed, this is but a token that the age has ceased to have a proper belief in it."¹

He did not agree with Dr. Whewell and "the whole *doctrinaire* school" that "the speculative belief of an age determines its moral character," and took the eighteenth century as a proof of "the failure of a prudential system of ethics as a restraining force upon society."²

In his sermons he showed a broad conception of Christianity and a high moral ideal which could not have been without great, if sometimes unconscious, influence upon his hearers at Oxford.

"Christianity," he said, "offers an object to the pure reason—its theology, its doctrine of the nature of God. Christianity as a system of religion comprises a theology; but the theology is not put forward as the essential part of the religion. Christianity is by nothing so much distinguished from the other religions known to us as by laying its whole weight on morality. It communicates no knowledge but what is subservient to practice. What it discloses of the Divine nature and government, it discloses only to ground human duty thereon. We are to be saved by a faith, but it is only by such a faith as is fruitful of works. . . . Other religions have in their degree comprised or recommended morality. Christianity is a system of practical ethics. . . . It is essentially a discipline of life, having indeed its basis on a fixed metaphysical doctrine, and embodied in a variable ceremonial."³

In this sermon (No. II.) Mark Pattison admirably developed the rationale of the Christian religion upon

¹ Essays and Reviews, pp. 264-5. ² Ibid., pp. 325-6. ³ Sermons, pp. 26-8.

Hegelian lines. It would be impossible to condense the argument without spoiling it. Here, as elsewhere, he took reason to be the sovereign arbiter in religious matters. For the Church of England he prayed, "May she never take the fatal step of standing upon authority instead of upon reason, upon intellect, upon education, upon the spiritual and moral cultivation of the soul!"¹ And again, speaking of the Christian Church in general, he said:—

"If the Church and reason have at later times been in conflict, it must be either that reason, being a fallible power of induction, has adopted for a time an erroneous conclusion, or that some Christian teachers have occasionally undertaken the defence of unreasonable matters."² He dreaded a "lower level of instruction among the clergy" than among the laity. But he had no dread of "the free air and the ultimate disclosures of science." "The true danger," he maintained fearlessly, "lies in any attempt to isolate theology, to make it a mere matter of rote, and memory, and tradition, while all other knowledge is active, real, and in constant contact with facts."³ In confirmation of Matthew Arnold's words as to the forces which develop Church doctrine he said: "A school of theology which repudiated philosophy and knew nothing of historical criticism, and took its stand upon the Bible as interpreted by each man's religious sentiment, had laid its foundation on the sand."⁴

Besides Pattison's theological breadth, there is much real religion in all his sermons. He was always exhorting his hearers, especially the students, to awake to a sense of the seriousness of life and the value of time; he strove to show them the essential oneness of the secular and the spiritual life, to keep before them the fact that education

¹ Sermons, p. 136. ² Ibid., p. 167. ³ Ibid., pp. 191-2. ⁴ Ibid., p. 207.

is not for the sake of this present existence only, but a part of the perfecting of the immortal soul. Even amusement, he insisted, must contribute to this end. "This steady hold of the *unum necessarium* is the hidden power that can give the grace and manly firmness of consistency to the most multiform and diversified activity. Whatever we do, let it tell towards the sum total of life."¹

The sermon on "The Commemoration of the Saints" is likewise full of excellent practical Christianity:—

"A saint," he here pointed out, "is nothing more than an eminent Christian, . . . only one who sets himself to acquire these [Christian] habits; who devotes himself to the practice of these virtues; who makes it his ambition to be good; who uses as much effort to be a *good* man as others do to be a great man; who places his joy and happiness in the daily exercise of piety and holy affections; who is ready to say with George Herbert, 'All worldly joys seem less when compared with showing mercy or doing kindness.'"²

It is well to bear in mind this side of Mark Pattison's character. We are too apt to think of him as only a scholar, a literary epicurean, even as somewhat pedantic and inhuman, and to forget that he usually was, and always tried to be, a true and humble Christian.

¹ Sermons, pp. 262-3.

² Ibid., pp. 279-82.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOHN WILLIAM COLENZO.

1814-1883.

OF the English prophets there have been few as brave, and none braver, than John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal. He began his crusade against bibliolatry and superstition at a time when persecution was active in the English Church, and he held on his way nothing daunted, amid much obloquy, until she had passed into a calmer and a wiser state of mind.

In 1861 he published his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans from a Missionary Point of View," thinking this Epistle particularly suited to be a guide to missionary enterprise, because it "dealt the deathblow to all notions of covenant and privilege," because it maintained God's justice, mercy, and love to be alike unchangeable and unfailing, and because it showed "that His will was absolutely righteous, and that it must work to produce righteousness in all beings endowed with a capacity for righteousness."¹ He accordingly explained those passages which seem most Calvinistic to be in reality expressive of the unbounded benevolence of God.

The part of his book which raised the greatest discus-

¹ Life of Bishop Colenso, by Rev. Sir G. Cox, vol. i. pp. 134-5.

sion was his repudiation of the dogma of everlasting punishment, especially for those who have had no opportunity of hearing the Gospel. After confessing that he had once believed in the dogma, he said :—

“I now declare that I can no longer maintain or give utterance to the doctrine of the endlessness of future punishments—that I dare not dogmatise at all on the matter—that I can only lay my hand upon my mouth, and leave it in the hands of the righteous and merciful Judge . . . and entertain the ‘hidden hope’ that there are remedial processes, when this life is ended, of which at present we know nothing, but which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will administer, as He in His wisdom shall see to be good.”¹

Elsewhere he said :—

“It is no dogmatic teaching to say that the light of that Presence, the conscious enjoyment of it, must be heaven, the blessedness and life of the creature ; or that in the loss of that light even for a moment, the sense of the Divine displeasure, must be the very sum of wretchedness, to be dreaded more than bodily torments, or contact with devils, or all the machinery of the popular ‘hell.’”²

He also claimed in this book that we have a witness within our hearts which is the “voice of God ;” that—

“We can only know God, His moral attributes, His justice, mercy, and truth, by what we know in ourselves of these excellences. . . . God then has given this light of the inner man to be the very guide and pole-star of our lives. . . . By that light within us the acts of our own lives must be judged, and, when necessity requires it, the acts of others also. By that light the sayings and doings of good men, the acts of the Church, the proceedings and decisions of her Fathers and Councils, the writings of prophets and apostles, the words recorded to have been uttered by our blessed Lord Himself, must all be tried.”³

¹ Commentary on Romans, pp. 197–8. ² Pentateuch, part vi. p. 643.

³ Ibid., pp. 208–9.

On this principle of the full rights of the human judgment he acted in the publication of his great work on the Pentateuch during the years 1862-1879. He constantly endeavoured to set before the thinking world that the Word of God may be contained in the Bible without the Bible being entirely the Word of God.

He considered it to be his own duty and that of every one who should write on the subject, "to tell out plainly the truth as God, he believes, has enabled him to see it. And that truth, in the present instance, . . . is this, that the Pentateuch, as a whole, was not written by Moses, and that with respect to some, at least, of the chief portions of the story, it cannot be regarded as historically true. It does not cease to contain the true 'Word of God,' with 'all things necessary for salvation,' to be 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.' . . . Only we must not attempt to put into the Bible what we think *ought* to be there; we must not indulge that 'forward delusive faculty,' as Bishop Butler styles the imagination, and lay it down for certain beforehand that God could only reveal Himself by means of an *infallible* book. We must be content to take this Bible as it is, and draw from it those lessons which it really contains."¹

The moral lessons which, as he said, the Bible really contains, and which can be read therein by the inward light of conscience by all, "sage or savage, child or philosopher," he diligently set before his readers and hearers, both in his great critical work and in his sermons, endeavouring only to clear away the mists of prejudice and ignorance which veil from our eyes this true Word of God.

"Let us teach them to look," he said, "for signs of God's Spirit speaking to them in the Bible in that of which their own hearts alone can be the judges, of which the heart of the

¹ Pentateuch, part i., Introductory Remarks, pp. 13-14.

simple child can judge as well as—often, alas! better than—that of the self-willed philosopher, critic, or sage—in that which speaks to the witness for God within them, to which alone, under God Himself, whose voice it utters in the secrets of his inner being, each man is ultimately responsible—to the reason and conscience. Let us bid them look for it in that within the Bible which tells them of what is good and pure, holy and loving, faithful and true, which speaks from God's Spirit directly to their spirits, though clothed in the outward form of a law, or parable, or proverb, or narrative, . . . in that which makes the living man leap up, as it were, in the strength of sure conviction, which no arguments could bring, no dogmas of Church or Council enforce, saying, . . . These words are God's, not the flesh, the outward matter, the mere letter, but the inward core and meaning of them—for they are spirit, they are life!

“But then, too,” he continued, “they must be taught to recognise the voice of God's Spirit, in whatever way, by whatever ministry, He vouchsafes to speak to the children of men, and to realise the solid comfort of the thought that, not in the Bible only, but to our fellow-men of all climes or countries, ages and religions, the same gracious Teacher is revealing, in different measures, according to His own good pleasure, the hidden things of God.”¹

And again:—

“Must we not feel, for instance, that the eternal law of justice and equity, which God Himself has written with His own finger upon the tables of our hearts, is directly at variance with such commands as these [Deut. xxiii. 1-12, xxi. 18-21, xx. 10-15]; that these cannot, at all events, be regarded as utterances of the blessed will of God; that the writer of them, though an inspired man, cannot certainly have written *thus* by Divine inspiration?

¹ Pentateuch, part i., Concluding Remarks, pp. 152-4.

"Such laws . . . we feel at once to be directly contradictory to those first principles of humanity and equity which God our Creator has planted within us, . . . and they equally contradict the plainest teaching of the Gospel of Christ. . . .

"We must then, even in reading the Scriptures, 'try the spirits, whether they are of God.' In this way only can we do the will of God, and discharge the true duty, and rise to the true dignity of man as the child of God. . . . We *must*—not only claim and exercise the *right*, but—bear the *responsibility* of private judgment, upon the things of the life to come, as well as this world."¹

He cautioned his readers as follows against arbitrary selection or rejection of passages in the Bible:—

"But when we say 'the Bible contains the Word of God,' we do not mean, as some have supposed, that we may pick and choose among the contents of the Bible—that we can separate the books or portions of the Bible, which *are* God's Word, from the books or portions which *are not*. We mean that throughout the Bible the Word of God will be heard by the listening ear and the obedient heart, reproving, exhorting, instructing, comforting—but that this Word is 'the spirit and the life' which breathes in the written words, not the mere flesh or letter of them."²

"It is," he constantly averred, "a great fallacy" to suppose that "because Divine truth is contained in the Scriptures, every statement in the Bible—scientific or historical—must be regarded as infallibly true."³ So also in his sermons he feared not to tell his congregation how much and how far he thought the Bible unreliable, and carefully showed them how it still is and must ever be most valuable and precious for its instruction in righteousness, for its sympathy in sorrow and doubt, and for

¹ Pentateuch, part iii. pp. 624–8.

² Ibid., part v. p. 311.

³ Ibid., p. 314.

its encouragement in conflict and tribulation, because it gives utterance to the highest emotions of the heart of man. For instance, after quoting the beatitudes, he continued:—

“Are these words true merely because they are written in the Bible, or merely because they were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself? Are they not felt at once by us to be essentially, eternally true? . . . Do we not know that they are among those words which ‘shall never pass away’? . . . Are not, I say, such words as these among those which, by the unanimous verdict of the human mind in its best and holiest moments, we ‘bind on earth, and they shall be bound in heaven’?”¹

And again:—

“But the very essence of the strength and support which we really receive from the Bible consists just exactly in this, that it is what it really is, a thoroughly human book, the work of human beings like ourselves, full of weakness, error, ignorance, infirmity, yet inspired with Divine light and life from above; of men in whose hearts the Living Word was speaking, to whose spirit great truths had been revealed by God’s Spirit, whose hands have been the agents in God’s gracious Providence to minister to us the Word of Life.”²

Once more, in a sermon on the Christian ministry, he said:—

“I doubt not for one moment that, when all these accretions of later growth are taken away, as they surely will by the progress of scientific research, the true Divine beauty of Christianity, of the religion of Christ, of the religion which Jesus taught, and in the practice of which He lived and died, will shine out with greater lustre than ever.”³

Among the more particular results which Colenso hoped

¹ Natal Sermons, pp. 27-9.

² Ibid., p. 62.

³ Ibid., pp. 111-12.

would be obtained by the acknowledgment of the fallibility of the Bible, were clearer and sounder views upon capital punishment, marriage with a deceased wife's sister, the keeping of the Lord's day, and, above all, upon sacerdotalism.¹

Upon critical grounds Colenso believed he had established the comparatively later origin of the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Chronicles, and also that these were written by the priests in the interests of sacerdotalism. Of the author of the Books of Chronicles he spoke with the utmost severity. He accused him roundly of writing for "another purpose than to teach mere history, namely, that of *deliberately reconstructing the history of his people, as known to himself in the older records, and doing this in the interests of the Levitical and priestly body,*"² thereby helping "to generate the narrow exclusiveness of Judaism and some of the worst corruptions of Christianity."³

Against the sacerdotal or ritualistic principle Colenso frequently protested in no measured terms:—

"The truth is," he said, "that the ritualistic system is for not a few of its votaries, whether clergy or laity, but a means of escaping from the painful duty of exercising thought upon the great questions which occupy—and in God's providence were *meant* especially to occupy—this age. . . .

"But this state of things can only last for a while. By degrees the light and life which is God's precious gift to the present age will penetrate into every corner of society; and as surely as the earth's motion round the sun, though once

¹ See Pentateuch and Moabite Stone, pp. 372, &c. ; also four sermons on the Sabbath in Natal Sermons.

² Pentateuch, part vi. pp. xxv.–vi.

³ Ibid., part vii. p. 514.

denounced by bishops and councils as heretical and damnable, is now recognised as a fact to be taught as elementary knowledge in the commonest village school, so before long will the non-Mosaic origin and the unhistorical character of the whole Pentateuchal story, together with the very late date of the Levitical legislation, be regarded as established facts in Bible instruction, through the very touch of which the whole foundation of the priestly and sacrificial system, so far as it is based on Scriptural authority, supposed to be Divinely infallible, will crumble into dust."¹

As may be supposed, he had no sympathy with dogmatic teaching. With him religion consisted not so much in knowing as in feeling, not in defining but in doing.

Referring to the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch, of Hebrews, &c., he said :—

“Man’s salvation—his happiness in this life and his hope for eternity—cannot possibly depend upon his having a correct faith in such points as these. . . . If the life of our soul depend wholly or mainly, or in any essential respect, upon our having a clear knowledge and an orthodox belief upon matters such as these, what multitudes would be excluded from the kingdom of heaven! . . . Blessed be God! the way of life eternal is not so difficult to find as this. . . . It is not hedged up with thorns, so that the wayfaring man may not be able to find it or set forth in it, unless guided by the priest. . . . That Living Word, which speaks to our hearts the lessons of Divine eternal truth, is something very different from the voice of human authority enforcing Church dogmas, creeds, and articles.”²

“To be a disciple of Jesus—and to receive His teaching respecting the Father—and to follow His example of love, gentleness, meekness, purity, truthfulness—it is not necessary to have a right form of words respecting things for which words are inadequate. . . . On the one hand, the merest child, the

¹ Pentateuch, part vi. pp. 635-40.

² Natal Sermons, p. 27.

child of the heathen or the savage, can receive with the heart the truth that God is our Father, that Jesus, in whom the true light was manifested 'which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,' is our Brother, our elder Brother, sent to tell us and to show us of the Father's love—and to lead us, if we will follow His footsteps, to an eternal home. On the other hand, the deepest thinker of us all will never fathom those mysteries which the clearest insight will only enable him still further to penetrate a little, and, if his heart be right and pure, more deeply to adore."¹

That he loved peace and concord better than war and controversy we can see in the sermon on "Preparation for the Lord's Table":—

"At other times," he said, "we may be occupied—and shall be rightly occupied—in considering those questions in theology which are the subjects of such deeply interesting discussions in the day in which we live. . . .

"But this morning let us prepare . . . for coming to the holy table in the spirit . . . of repentance, of faith and of charity.

"This is pre-eminently the feast of love, an expression of our fellowship with one another as followers of Christ, as children of God. . . . That feast, which should have been the brightest light upon our path, as the sign of our love to one another and of God's love to us all, has been made to cast the deepest shadow. . . .

"But let us, my brethren, not so learn Christ. Let us welcome to our fellowship all who love Him—all who love

¹ Natal Sermons, p. 106. I cannot resist calling attention to the striking contrast of this passage with Maurice's theory that Christianity cannot be understood without the organisation of a Church, and that it was ridiculous of Colenso to expect his intelligent Zulu to appreciate Christianity without a definite political basis. Surely Colenso's conception of the Christian religion is hereby shown to have been both truer and simpler than that of Maurice.

God and who love man—whatever their shades of opinion may be.

“ . . . If we must needs differ, let us differ as Christian men should do, with respect for each other’s conscientious convictions. . . . If we must express our differences, let us labour to do so with firmness and yet with forbearance, ‘speaking the truth in love’—not heaping upon those from whom we differ hard names, however mistaken we may deem them.”¹

Or again:—

“If then I am asked, ‘What shall bind us together in one?’ I answer, God Himself will do it in His own good time and way, by breathing into us more of the Spirit of *Charity* and infusing into us more of the love of truth for the truth’s sake.”²

Colenso did not scruple to explain the temptation of Christ in the wilderness as being an account of the very natural thoughts which would have assailed Him at the beginning of His career; and the theory of possession by devils as the natural way of expressing, at a time when miracles were commonly believed in, the healing power of Christ’s personality and teaching upon sorrowful and sinful men.

Respecting miracles he said:—

“I could believe and receive the miracles of Scripture heartily, if only they were authenticated and veracious history; though, if this is not the case with the Pentateuch, any miracles which rest on such an unstable support must necessarily fall to the ground with it.”³

His views touching the divinity of Christ and the Trinity are nowhere very explicitly stated. He appeared

¹ Natal Sermons, pp. 281–91.

² Pentateuch, part v. p. xli.

³ Ibid., part i. p. 10.

to incline towards recognising the divinity of the human race, Christ differing in degree and not in kind from other men. In his "Commentary on Romans" occurs this very remarkable passage :—

"It does not appear that our Lord ever confessed His divinity on earth, or revealed His full name to His disciples, until that last evening when He spoke of 'the glory which He had with His Father before the world was.' Otherwise all His expressions might be, and probably were, understood, even by His chosen followers, as the words of a mere man, a chosen messenger of God, having something strange, no doubt, and mysterious about Him, but a man still like unto themselves, though one fully intent upon fulfilling to the uttermost the work of Him who sent Him. . . . It was for the Spirit to take afterwards of the things of Christ and reveal them to the apostles, and through them to the world."¹

Had Bishop Colenso directed his great critical ability and learning to the New Testament as much as to the Old, and pursued the thoughts contained in these words somewhat further, he might have anticipated Professor Réville's epoch-making little book on the "Dogma of Christ's Divinity." It is not likely he would have reached similar results to Newman in the latter's "Essay on Development in Christian Doctrine."

The Bishop of Natal did not trouble himself much about the actual constitution of the English Church. He was, on the whole, rather inclined to exaggerate its narrowness. It must be remembered, however, that he had arrived at his heresies both upon the subject of eternal punishment and the infallibility of Scripture before the judgment upon "Essays and Reviews" had vindicated

¹ Commentary, pp. 15-18.

the breadth of the Establishment. He pursued his inquiries fearlessly, though not without misgivings lest it should not be his duty to leave the Church. Ultimately he decided that, however unfortunate or unwise the restrictions of subscription to the Articles may be, the ordination vow of the ministers of the English Church, and the pledge at consecration of its bishops, commands rather than forbids their free inquiry and truthful teaching. He came therefore to the conclusion for himself, and recommended it to the consideration of others, that he was justified in using words and formularies with the common interpretation of which he no longer agreed, provided he explained to his people the only construction he could conscientiously put upon them. Defenders of the comprehensive character of the English Church must be always grateful to Colenso for remaining in it in spite of the obloquy cast upon him, and the scruples of conscience by which he was at one time assailed.¹

Bishop Colenso was no mere scholar. He was an active missionary, a generous friend to his coloured people, and a brave politician. He taught truth, freedom, and love to God and man by his deeds and by his words. He has been accused, even by those who have agreed with him in his opinions, of being too vehement, too unsparing in his utterances. It may be so. He, however, thought otherwise. He did not believe it to be his duty to lie for God, nor yet to tell half truths and to shirk the truth in His service. He believed that the day was past, if indeed it had ever been, for shifts and half measures, and

¹ In the prefaces to parts i. and ii. of the *Pentateuch* Colenso discussed and justified his continuance in the Church of England.

that unless the facts of science and of philology were faced fearlessly, true religion would be lost amid the ruins of a crumbling theology.

Here is his apologia in his own words:—

“It has been said by some, ‘Why make this disturbance? Why publish to the world matters like these, about which theologians may have doubts?’ I answer that they are not theologians only who are troubled with such doubts, and that we have a duty to discharge towards that large body of our brethren—*how* large it is impossible to say, but probably much larger than is commonly imagined—who not only doubt, but disbelieve, many important parts of the Mosaic narrative, as well as to those whose faith may be more simple and uninquiring, though not therefore necessarily more deep and sincere, than theirs. We cannot expect such as these to look to us for comfort and help in their religious perplexities, if they cannot place entire confidence in our honesty of purpose and good faith—if they have any reason to suppose that we are willing to keep back any part of the truth, and are afraid to state the plain facts of the case.”¹

Bishop Colenso suffered for the truth’s sake: his works were condemned in Convocation; he was tried for heresy by the Bishop of Cape Town; his right to receive the salary as Bishop of Natal from the Trustees of the Colonial Bishopric Fund was also called in question.

The sittings of Convocation upon his writings present a pitiable spectacle of ecclesiastical folly. Happily, however, the opinions of that body have no real influence upon the doctrine of the English Church. The Bishop of Exeter said he had *not read the book* under discussion, but yet dared to add he was “thankful that it had called forth so strong a feeling of indignation!” Archdeacon Denison,

¹ Pentateuch, part i. p. xxxv.

whose escape from persecution had taught neither mercy nor wisdom, took it for granted that many members of Convocation had not read the first part of the "Pentateuch," and hoped they would not read the second, but simply accept the report of the Committee upon it!¹ The discussions in either House gave, however, opportunity for a display of courage, manliness, and Christianity by Dean Stanley² and Bishop Thirlwall.³

Bishop Gray of Cape Town, a High Churchman, pretended to try and to depose the Bishop of Natal on the strength of a clause in the letters patent conferring their bishopries upon them. His proceeding was appealed against before the Privy Council, and the letters patent were pronounced in this particular to be invalid and exceeding the lawful power of the Crown; "the proceedings taken by the Bishop of Cape Town, and the judgment or sentence pronounced by him against the Bishop of Natal, were therefore ruled as null and void in law."⁴ As Bishop Gray would not acknowledge the civil power so far as to indict his suffragan for heresy according to the law of the land, Colenso was neither condemned nor acquitted. This is the less to be regretted, as the judgment on "Essays and Reviews" covers the substance of all possible charges against him. The Bishop of Cape Town talked of excommunicating his "very reverend brother," but was dissuaded by Bishop Wilberforce and John Keble: the latter admitting that it was for "a most

¹ See Life of Bishop Colenso, by Rev. Sir G. Cox, vol. i. p. 47.

² See Stanley's Essays on Church and State, pp. 311-43.

³ Thirlwall's Charges, &c., vol. iii.

⁴ Lord Westbury's judgment. See Law Reports, Privy Council Appeals, vol. iii. pp. 1-16.

sorrowful and heartbreaking reason, . . . viz., that nobody now—at least no Anglican—with very few exceptions, really believes in excommunication; so it would be disregarded and prove a world-wide scandal.”¹

Finally, the attempt to withhold from Bishop Colenso the stipend of his see was also frustrated, the Master of the Rolls—Sir J. Romilly—determining that the nullity of a part of the letters patent did not affect Colenso’s legal position as Bishop of Natal; that he could exercise all the functions and perform all the acts which belong to a bishop within the diocese of Natal as if he were the bishop of an English diocese; and that he was consequently fully entitled to his stipend.

Thus have they persecuted, though not killed, this prophet: when will they set about building his sepulchre?

¹ Life of Wilberforce, vol. iii. p. 128.

CHAPTER XIV.

ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY.

1815-1881.

THE subject of the present chapter is perhaps the most ideal Churchman of any whom we have as yet examined in this book. Some have grasped as well, or nearly as well, the nature of the national Church; others as well, or nearly as well, the nature of the Christian religion; but few or none have so well understood alike all the requirements of their country and the teaching of Christ. Arnold was an equally able statesman, Robertson an equally enlightened Christian, but neither did quite so much towards restoring true Christianity to the English Church as did Arthur Stanley, who combined the genius of both.

The great aim of Stanley's teaching was to show the indissoluble unity of religion and morality. "The one great corruption," he said, "to which all religion is exposed is its separation from morality."¹ "In Christianity nothing is of real concern except that which makes us wiser and better; everything which does make us wiser and better is the very thing Christianity intends."² To

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, p. 59.

² Christian Institutions, pp. 283-284.

reveal the moral character of God, he held, was the supreme purpose of the life of Christ; that life he further held in greater reverence even than His death, for without the life the death was meaningless, while by the death the life was consummated.

"If we wish to know," he said, "... what are the essential characteristics of the Divine nature, look at the life and character of Christ. . . . By seeing, as we must see, that the most vital part is the moral character—the will, the wisdom, the love, the justice, the compassion, the forbearance—we learn beyond any manner of doubt that these, according to the Bible, give the best conception we can form of the Divine mind itself. . . . In adoring these, in adoring Him, we acknowledge that God is, above all other thoughts that we can have of Him, a moral Being. By these Christlike and therefore Godlike qualities, . . . we, weak and erring as we are, far more than by power, or wisdom, or costly offerings, or splendid rites, or correct belief, are enabled to hold communion with the Father of spirits, who thus alone by us can be imagined or approached. . . . Christ is our Example. But He is much more than our Example. . . . We must not divide the two natures . . . the perfect divinity is seen only in the perfect humanity. . . . The more fearlessly we explore the depths of His example as the likeness of man, the more complete will be our knowledge of His revelation of the mind of God."¹

Nearly all the usual doctrines of Christianity, especially in the crude forms of thought and speech of orthodoxy, are noticeably absent from the writings of Stanley. The Incarnation is almost the only doctrine he was careful to insist upon, and then only in its moral bearings. "To be like Christ," he said, "is the one object which the whole New Testament impresses upon us. He who is not like Christ, however correct his belief, is not a Christian except

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, pp. 100-102.

in name. He who is like Christ, amidst whatever differences, is a Christian in deed and in truth.”¹ But in the Incarnation Stanley saw not so much a unique phenomenon as the earnest of the latent divinity of the human race. He believed in the reign of Christ, or the Christlike; in the universal diffusion of the Christ-spirit; in the coming of “the kingdom of heaven—that is, the triumph of good over evil.”² “*Christus vincit*,” he cried, concluding one of his finest speeches, “*Christus regnat, Christus imperat*.”³

It was this great though gradual change, amounting almost to a fresh Reformation, which he predicted for the Christian Church.

“A serious comparison of the actual contents of the Scriptures with the actual course of ecclesiastical events almost inevitably brings us to the conclusion that the existing materials, principles, and doctrines of the Christian religion are far greater than have ever yet been employed; that the Christian Church, if it were permitted or enabled to use them, has a long lease of new life and new hope before it, such as has never yet been enjoyed. Look at the Bible on the one hand, and History on the other; see what are the points on which the Scriptures lay most emphatic stress; think how much of the sap and life of Christendom has run to leaf, and not to fruit; remember how constant is the protest of Scripture—and, we may add, of the best spirits of the universal Church—against preferring any cause of opinion or ceremony to justice, holiness, truth and love; observe how constantly and steadily all these same intimations point to one Divine Object, and one only, as the life and essence of Christianity—we cannot, with these experiences, hesitate to say that, if the Christian Church be drawing to its end, or if it continue to its end with no other

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, p. 114.

² Essays on Church and State, p. 354.

³ Ibid., p. 488.

objects than those which it has hitherto sought, it will end with its acknowledged resources confessedly undeveloped, its finest hopes of usefulness almost untried and unattempted. It will have been like an ungenial spring cut short in full view of summer, a stately vessel wrecked within the very sight of shore."¹

In his masterly rationale of the Trinity, showing the intrinsic unity of God in nature, in history, and in the individual, with a profounder philosophy and in clearer language than had any of his predecessors in the English Church, Stanley dwelt on the moral and practical bearings of the great metaphysical speculation. He showed the loss, not only to thought, but to conduct, that would result from omitting any one of the three aspects of the Deity:—

“If we cease to think of the Universal Father, we become narrow and exclusive. If we cease to think of the Founder of Christianity and the grandeur of Christendom, we lose our hold on the great historic events which have swayed the hopes and affections of man in the highest moment of human progress. If we cease to think of the Spirit, we lose the inmost meaning of creed and prayer, of Church and Bible, of human character, and of vital religion.”²

But even here he refused to restrict belief to reasoned thought, still less to any definite form of words:—

“Many a one,” he went on to say, “has repeated this sacred name, and yet never fulfilled in himself the truth which it conveys. Some have been unable to repeat it, and yet have grasped the substance which alone gives it spiritual value. . . . Wherever we are taught to know and understand the real nature of

¹ Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 80, &c.; also printed as Introductory Lectures to those on the Eastern Church, pp. lxxvii., &c.

² Christian Institutions, pp. 278–9.

the world in which our lot is cast, there is a testimony, however humble, to the name of the Father; wherever we are taught to know and to admire the highest and best of human excellence, there is a testimony to the name of the Son; wherever we learn the universal application of such excellence, there is a testimony to the name of the Holy Ghost.”¹

Stanley truly deserved to be reckoned a knight of the Holy Ghost. Except Charles Kingsley, perhaps no one bore such direct witness as he to the power and work of the Holy Spirit:—

“To believe,” he said, “in a Presence within us pleading with our prayers, groaning with our groans, aspiring with our aspirations; to believe in the Divine supremacy of conscience; to believe that the spirit is above the letter; to believe that the substance is above the form; to believe that the meaning is more important than the words; to believe that truth is greater than authority or fashion or inspiration, and will at last prevail; to believe that goodness and justice and love are the bonds of perfectness, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead though he live, and which bind together those who are divided in all other things whatsoever—this, according to the biblical uses of the word, is involved in the expression, ‘I believe in the Holy Ghost!’”²

Stanley constantly repeated his belief that the Christian Church does not consist in those who profess the name of Christ in any particular way, or indeed in any way at all, but in those who live the life of Christ, whether they have so much as heard of Him or not.

“The whole point of the description of the last judgment,” he said, “is that even the good heathens having never heard His name yet have seen and served Him; and when they asked

¹ Christian Institutions, pp. 283-4.

² Ibid., p. 277.

Him 'When saw we Thee?' He answers without hesitation or reserve, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me.' . . . These good deeds, wherever practised, are the true signs that Christ and Christianity have been there. Even if practised without naming His name, they are still the trophies of the victory of good over evil for which He lived and died; they are in the desert-island of the mortal existence the footmarks which show that something truly human, and therefore truly Divine, has passed that way."¹

"It used to be said, in the wars between the Moors and Spaniards, that a perfect character would be the man who had the virtues of the Mussulman and the creed of the Christian. But this is exactly reversing our Lord's doctrine. If the virtues of the Arabs were greater than the virtues of the Spaniards, then, whether they accepted Christ in word or not, it was they who were the true believers, and it was the Christians who were the infidels.

" . . . When Bishop Pearson in his work on the Creed vindicates the divinity of Christ without the slightest mention of any of those moral qualities by which He has bowed down the world before Him, his grasp of the doctrine is far feebler than that of Rousseau or Mill, who have seized the very attributes which constitute the marrow and essence of His nature."²

Almost every article Stanley ever wrote, certainly every sermon he ever preached, bore witness to his grasp of the essence of the Christian religion. See his exquisite sermon preached at Greyfriars, Edinburgh, on the two additional commandments: that of the Samaritans, "'Thou shalt build an altar on Mount Gerizim, and there only shalt thou worship'—the eleventh commandment according to sects and parties and partisans," and "the true eleventh commandment of the Christian religion, 'That ye love

¹ Christian Institutions, pp. 111-12.

² Ibid., pp. 38-9.

one another.'” Note too the beauty of thought—a veritable prose poem—of the figure of the Decalogue written on the granite rock of Sinai, which had been fused and wrought upon by a primeval central fire, being emblematic of the universal character of duty “warmed at the heart and fed at the source by the eternal central fire of love.”¹

Or, again, see how in the sermon on the parable of the good Samaritan he pointed out that hereby the Christian character is shown to be possible in those of a different Church and creed, of different opinions and doctrines to ourselves, and that “goodness is better than orthodoxy, and charity greater than faith.” “If there be any doctrine or dogma in the Christian religion,” he went on to say, “on which our Lord lays special stress, it is the doctrine or dogma contained in the parable of the good Samaritan. How vast a difference would it have made in the whole face and history of Christendom had the catholic, the evangelical truth expressed in this parable taken its proper place—we may almost say, had it been recognised at all in the creeds and confessions, not to say in the practice, of Christian churches!”²

A more interesting monograph could not easily be found than the chapter in his “Christian Institutions” on the Roman catacombs. In these records of the popular religion of the first Christians, Stanley noted that there are none of the controversies, the doctrines, and the dogmas of later Christianity. “The belief of the catacombs, as a general rule, is not that which is either defended by

¹ Lectures on the Church of Scotland, pp. 1-12.

² Lectures and Addresses at St. Andrews, pp. 176-177.

modern theologians or attacked by modern sceptics;" the "ideas which form the all-sufficing creed of the early Church are not openly disputed by any Church or sect in Christendom." From this he hoped that there was not after all "anything very absurd in supposing that all Christians have something in common with each other;" and that by a recognition of this the union of Christendom might be effected. What was, as Stanley read it, the "popular religion of the first Christians"? "It was," he said, "in one word, the religion of the Good Shepherd. The kindness, the courage, the grace, the love, the beauty of the Good Shepherd was to them, if we may so say, Prayer Book and Articles, creed and canons, all in one." The comprehensive character of the Christian religion, he believed, was symbolised by the image of the Good Shepherd, in one instance, bearing on His shoulder "not a lamb, but a kid; not a sheep, but a goat."¹

Furthermore, the Dean of Westminster boldly blamed the creeds, and still more the chief expositions of the creeds, for omitting all mention of the moral excellences of God and of Christ:²—

"If once," he said, "it became the chief article of the Christian faith, as it now is not the article of any Christian confession, whether of Trent, Geneva, London, or Westminster, that the object of the Church is to make men better and wiser, and that goodness and truth are the chief offerings in which God delights, then the various objects and forms of religious interest and affection will assume their right proportions. We shall search out the essential meaning of each, and that meaning will assign to each its due place."³

¹ Christian Institutions, chap. xiii.

² Ibid., pp. 267, &c.

³ Essays on Church and State, p. 248.

Elsewhere he observed :—

“ In the diversity of the Church will be found a more powerful argument for the Divine origin of Christianity itself than in the most perfect unity. . . . The distinguishing character of the Christian Church has been that it has assumed different forms, and yet not perished in the process. . . . To find Christ or Antichrist exclusively in any one community is against charity and against humility, but, above all, against the plain facts of history. Let us hold this truth firmly, and we shall then have assured ourselves against the two worst evils which infest the well-being of religious communities, the love of controversy and the love of proselytising.”¹

Stanley earnestly advocated the study of ecclesiastical history as a means of increasing toleration and a better mutual understanding among the Churches. “ Even the most cursory view,” he felt sure, “ of the various sects and Churches of the world will make us suspect that we are not all truth and goodness, nor they all error and vice.”²

Stanley’s ideal for the English Church was not less wide than his conception of Christianity. For instance, writing at the time of the Gorham controversy, he pleaded for “ those that suffer most,” who “ most require the aid of Christian institutions at such times,” namely, “ the great mass of the nation, rich and poor, male and female, who are members of the Church of England because they wish to be religious without being members of a party or of a sect. . . . What they desire, and what from any good pastor they will receive, is the permission and the help to worship God as their fathers worshipped Him, to serve Him truly in those various stations in which He has placed them, to be strengthened and built up in that holy

¹ Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, pp. 4-6; Introduction to Lectures on the Eastern Church, pp. lxxiii.-iv.

² Ibid., pp. 65-6.

faith which is indeed in every sense beyond and 'without controversy!'"¹

For the sake of these simple ones he even wished theological discussions might be carried on in Latin, that the non-scholars might escape disturbance.

Similarly, in the matter of vestments, ornaments, and rubric, it was *because* he held these things as of "absolute indifference and triviality" when compared with "matters of serious religion," that he said "it is high time to see whether we could not once and for ever dispel the idea that the kingdom of God or 'the workshop of Satan' consists in the colour of a coat or the shape of a cloak or the use of a handkerchief," and "to speak of them as of no significance is the true translation of the great maxim of the Apostle, 'Circumcision availeth nothing, *nor uncircumcision.*'" It was because of this indifference, almost contempt, that he exhorted to tolerance and forbearance, to the recognition by each party of the rights of conscience and of judgment of the others:—

"Let us be firmly persuaded," he said, and this is the principle of his entire teaching, "that error is most easily eradicated by establishing truth, and darkness most permanently displaced by diffusing light, and then, whilst the best parts of the High Church party will be preserved to the Church by their own intrinsic excellence, the worst parts will be put down, not by the irritating and often futile process of repression, but by the pacific and far more effectual process of enforcing the opposite truths, of creating in the Church a wholesome atmosphere of manly, generous feeling, in which all that is temporary, acrid, and trivial will fade away, and all that is eternal, reasonable and majestic will flourish and abound!"²

¹ Essays on Church and State, pp. 19-21.

² Christian Institutions, pp. 166-75.

Stanley's theory of the prophetic office was similar to that of Arnold and of Robertson. The Hebrew prophecies, he too pointed out, "are almost always founded on the denunciation of moral evil, on the exaltation of moral good. . . . The nations whose doom is pronounced thus become representatives of moral principles and examples to all ages alike."¹ The prophets, he said—

"Are not so much representative characters as exceptional. Their life and teaching is a struggle and protest against some of the deepest prejudices and passions of their countrymen. . . . The religious world of the Jewish Church is to them, as to a Greater than they, an unfailing cause of grief, of surprise, of indignation. In the name of God they attack that which to all around them seems to be religion. Their clinging trust to the One Supreme source of spiritual goodness and truth, with its boundless consequences, is the chief, as it is the sufficient, cause of their pre-eminence."²

Such as these prophets were he desired that the Christian clergy should now be:—

"There is still one calling in the world in which, if any, the prophetic spirit, the prophetic mission, ought at least in part to live on, and that is the calling of the Christian clergy. We are not like the Jewish priests, we are not like the Jewish Levites, but we have, God be praised, some faint resemblance to the Jewish prophets. . . . Like them, we are called not to mere ritual, but to teach and instruct. . . . O glorious profession, if we would see ourselves in this our true prophetic aspect! . . . Oh, if the spirit of our profession, of our order, of our body, were the spirit or anything like the spirit of the ancient prophets! if with us truth, charity, justice, fairness to opponents, were a passion, a doctrine, a point of honour, to be upheld, through good report and evil, with the same energy

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, p. 82.

² Lectures on the Jewish Church, vol. ii., Preface, p. 9.

as that with which we uphold our position, our opinions, our enterprises, our partnerships! . . . The spirit of the world asks first, 'Is it safe; is it pious?' secondly, 'Is it true?' The spirit of the prophets asks, 'Is it true?' secondly, 'Is it safe?' The spirit of the world asks first, 'Is it prudent?' secondly, 'Is it right?' The spirit of the prophets asks first, 'Is it right?' secondly, 'Is it prudent?' It is not that they or we hold different doctrines on these matters, but that we hold them in different proportions. What they put first we put second; what we put second they put first. The religious energy which we reserve for objects of temporary or secondary importance they reserve for objects of eternal and primary importance."¹

On the same lines of argument Stanley showed, in "Christian Institutions," how ecclesiastical vestments were originally but the common dress of clergy and laity alike, with no symbolic, sacerdotal, sacrificial, or mystical meaning; and further, that "it would have been perfectly easy, had the Christian Church of the first and second centuries been possessed with the idea of carrying on the Jewish priesthood, to have adopted the very dress worn by the Jewish priests, or some other dress equally distinctive."²

Of the intrinsic breadth of the English Church Stanley was firmly persuaded. Speaking of the Ritualism controversy, he said:—

"We claim for the Church of England a higher, a holier calling than anything which these passing fancies or isolated fragments of all but extinct beliefs would indicate. We claim for it the honour due to a reformed Church in a reformed State, which, with and through the State, desires to be formed and reformed anew by the spirit of each successive age—a

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, pp. 64-5.

² Christian Institutions, p. 161.

Church which, however much at times it has falsified its principles and retarded the course of true Christian progress, yet in these principles contains the pledge of an outward and inward movement that will, we humbly trust, continue when both the 'brilliant fantastic coruscation of Ritualism' and the 'weltering molten flood' of hierarchical pretensions have passed away from its borders."¹

Once more let us note Stanley's words on this subject:—

"The more comprehensive, the more free, the more impartial, is our study of any or every branch of ecclesiastical history, the more will it be in accordance with the spirit and with the letter of the Church of England."²

He assisted every effort to widen the English Church and welcomed every proof of her liberality. To his "Letter to the Bishop of London" in 1863 the passing of the Clerical Subscription Amendment Act was largely due. He caused great excitement and wrath by not only admitting, but inviting, to Communion at Westminster Abbey a Unitarian member of the Bible Revision Committee. He also deeply offended the narrow prejudices of some by instituting a series of addresses at the Abbey from ministers of Nonconforming bodies, and even, as in the case of Professor Max Müller, from one of no ordination whatever. He desired some further reforms in the English Church—such as the repeal of the canon which refuses Christian burial to the unbaptized. He rejoiced in the undogmatic character of modern theology, saying, "It will succeed because it appeals as far as it can to certainties, because it distinguishes between essentials and non-essentials, and endeavours to fasten on essentials.

¹ *Essays on Church and State*, pp. 290–1.

² *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, p. 54; *Introductory Lectures to Eastern Church*, p. lx.

It accepts facts wherever it can find them—facts of history, facts of science, facts of philosophy; above all, the eternal facts of the moral nature of God and of man. . . . ‘*Vera sum*’ is its language, ‘*nihil verum a me alienum puto!*’”¹

Of Stanley, as of his Master, it may indeed, in all reverence, be said that “he came not to destroy, but to fulfil.” He strove ever to show under all forms of thought, speech, and practice the abiding principle of religion. His aim was to find “a better and not the darker side” of the institutions of Christendom.² In his treatment of the Sacraments he carefully emphasised their moral and permanent element, through all the manifold changes of form which they have undergone in early Christian, in Catholic, and in Protestant times. He was strengthened in the hope of a final union of Christendom by the very diversity of these forms. The Catholic custom of denying the cup to the laity he took as an acknowledgment on their part of the immaterial nature of the Sacrament.

“It was justified,” he said, “on ground which is fatal to the localisation of the Divine Presence in the earthly elements. It was maintained that the communicant received the benefit of the Sacrament as completely if he partook of one of the two species as if he partook of both.”³

In both Baptism and the Eucharist he claimed the moral object as being the primary, permanent, and solely important element.

The essential meaning of Baptism was, he said, in the words of the English Baptismal service, to “represent

¹ Essays on Church and State, p. 483.

² Christian Institutions, p. 8.

³ Ibid., pp. 94-5.

unto us our Christian profession, which is to follow Christ and to be made like unto Him. . . .

"It was not by water, much or little, but by the Spirit (as it is expressed in the Fourth Gospel) that the second birth of man is wrought in the heart. . . . It was not by the act of baptizing, but by preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, that the world was converted."¹

". . . Even in the Roman Office, and much more in the Protestant Offices, the moral element is found; and probably, to the more enlightened members of all Churches, the idea is never altogether absent that the main object of the Eucharist is the moral improvement of the communicants. Nevertheless it is necessary to bring out as strongly as possible this moral element as the primary, it is hardly too much to say the sole, meaning of the words on which the institution of the Eucharist is founded."²

"What," he asked, "is the most essential characteristic, the most precious part of Christ, the most peculiar and vivifying element of Christendom?" He replied in the words ascribed to Ignatius of Antioch, "'The blood of Christ is love or charity.' . . . Love," he went on, "unselfish love, is there [in the New Testament] spoken of again and again as the fundamental essence of the highest life of God; and it is also evident, on the face of the Gospels, that it is the fundamental motive and characteristic of the life and death of Christ. It is this love stronger than death, this love manifesting itself in death, the love willing to spend itself for others, that is the blood of the life with which God is well pleased. Not the pain or the torture of the Cross—for that was alike odious to God and useless to man—but the love, the self-devotion, the generosity, the magnanimity, the forgiveness, the toleration, the compassion, of which the blood was the expression, and of which that life and death were the fulfilment."³

"It is, . . ." he declared, "this final or supreme test of our

¹ Christian Institutions, pp. 11-13.

² Ibid., p. 127.

³ Ibid., 117-18.

love and loyalty that the cup of the Eucharist suggests,—our willingness, if so be, to sacrifice our own selves, to shed our blood, for what we believe to be right and true for the good of others.”¹

In his treatment of the Bible Stanley again dwelt on the identity of religion and morality.

“Religion,” he said, “does not consist in counting the syllables of the Bible, but in doing what it tells us.”²

Speaking of the diversity of its materials, he said:—

“It is this which makes researches into the Bible so attractive, so suggestive, so inexhaustible. Its contradictions and variations, the large variations of the Septuagint from the Hebrew text, the well-known discrepancies between the several Evangelists, or between the Books of Kings and Chronicles—how invaluable as a Divine witness to the great evangelical doctrine that the spirit is above the letter, the whole above the parts, the end above the means!”³

Stanley's guiding principle of seeking the soul of good in things evil, of truth in things erroneous, is exemplified here also. It was not his method to hold falsehood up to the light of day, but rather so to dwell upon truth that error shrank back and disappeared. There are indeed diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. The method pursued by those whom we have examined in the three preceding chapters was often very different from Stanley's, but their aim was one, and the Spirit who guided them was also one. The absence of the name of God from the Book of Esther or the despondency of the Book of Ecclesiastes were no reasons, to Stanley's thinking, for their expulsion from the Canon, but were, on the contrary,

¹ Christian Institutions, pp. 120-21.

² Ibid., p. 337.

³ The Bible, its Form and Substance, pp. 34-5.

reasons for their being welcomed—the one as “a blessed assurance that the Spirit of God may be found where His name is not, as surely as it often is found where His name is;” the other that “the cries of doubt and perplexity which man refuses to hear have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and not been shut out from His written Word.”¹

Although he earnestly denied underrating any part of the sacred volume, and declared that to him “infinite and unfeigned delight” was “imparted by a chapter of geographical names in the Book of Joshua, the dark story of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, or of Ishmael the son of Nethaniah,” he added that “we can never be too often reminded that there is a sacred doctrine of proportion in all things, Divine as well as human. Truth is one as light is one; but light has its many colours, and truth its many shades, its many degrees, its many aspects.”²

Accordingly he cautioned his hearers and readers against what he compared to “the earliest of Christian heresies—Docetism, or ‘phantom-worship’—the reluctance to recognise in sacred objects their identity with our own flesh and blood,” so that “even to speak of any portion of the Bible as a ‘history’ has been described even by able and pious men as an outrage upon religion.”³

In another place he asserted the practical disbelief of his clerical brethren in the equal inspiration of the whole Canon of Scripture:—

“There are . . . not above fifty clergymen in England who

¹ The Bible, its Form and Substance, pp. 38-9.

² Ibid., p. 42.

³ Lectures on the Jewish Church, vol. i., Preface, pp. viii.-ix.

fully and from their hearts believe the precepts of Leviticus or the pedigrees of the Book of Chronicles, the description of the hare as a ruminant animal, or the imprecations of Nehemiah on his enemies to be immediately and absolutely the Word of God, in the same sense, or anything like the same sense, as they believe this of the Sermon on the Mount or the farewell discourses in St. John's Gospel." ¹

Stanley did not altogether approve of the writings of the Bishop of Natal. It was, therefore, all the more to his honour, all the more to the honour of both, that when Convocation sought to condemn the author of the "Commentary on the Pentateuch," he spoke eloquently, though unavailingly, for the accused. Furthermore, with a fine chivalry, due perhaps to his ancient lineage, he offered himself to the same judgment and condemnation as "those who are unbefriended and who are absent." ²

It must not be supposed for a moment that Stanley feared scientific truth or closed his ears to the voice of criticism.

"We often hear," he said, "of the reconciliation of theology and science. The phrase is well intended. . . . But it does not exactly describe the case. What we need is the recognition that, as far as they meet, theology and science are one and indivisible. Whatever enlarges our ideas of nature enlarges our ideas of God. Whatever gives us a deeper insight into the nature of the Author of the universe gives us a deeper insight into the secrets of the universe itself. Whatever is bad theology is also bad science; whatever is good science is also good theology." ³

Again, referring to the problem of miracles, he said:—

¹ Essays on Church and State, pp. 123-4.

² See "The Church of South Africa," in Essays on Church and State, p. 330.

³ Lectures and Addresses at St. Andrews, p. 92.

"... If in our studies we find that the limits of the natural and the supernatural are less definite than was once imagined, this may well be a cause, not of fear and regret, but of thankfulness and hope."¹

In this connection we may remark that he repudiated the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, which belief, he pointed out, was "so emphatically contradicted by St. Paul."²

Neither did he entertain the notion of a material heaven and hell. He said: "It is the love of God and the fear of God, the love of goodness and the hatred of sin, not the hope of heaven or the fear of hell, that in the Bible are made the foundations of human action—the way to eternal life." He then went on to recount the beautiful legend of the vision of the king who saw a woman "with a brazier of burning coals in one hand and a vase of water in the other," who called herself the Christian religion, saying she had come "with these burning coals to dry up the rivers of Paradise, and with these streams of water to quench the fires of hell, that henceforth mankind may serve me for myself alone, may hate sin and cleave to good, for the love of God and for the love of goodness."³

It is impossible to give more than specimens of Stanley's teaching. Every page of his many books teems with golden thoughts, happy illustrations, fervent piety. His whole life was a sermon. Seldom has the Christian religion been preached as attractively and healthily as in the words and deeds of Arthur Stanley. His ideal of the

¹ *Essays on Church and State*, pp. 80-1.

² *Christian Institutions*, note, pp. 266-7.

³ *Essays on Church and State*, pp. 129-31.

Christian profession is thus stated in the sermon he preached at his installation at Westminster:—

“ . . . We know what we mean by saying that a child or man is ‘full of life.’ That is (as long as God grants us health and strength and spirits) what our sacrifice of ourselves should be—‘full of life.’ Not desponding, sickly, pining, morbid, morose; not gloomy, chilling, cold, forbidding; not languid, lazy, indolent, inactive; but full of life and warmth and energy; cheerful and making others cheerful, gay and making others gay, happy and making others happy, contented and making others contented, at ease and putting others at ease, active and making others active, doing good and making others do good, by our living, lively, life-like, vivid vitality—filling every corner of our souls and bodies, filling every corner of the circle, the institution in which we move, with the fresh life-blood of a warm, genial, kindly Christian heart.”¹

Like all the most earnest followers of Christianity, Stanley was often misunderstood, maligned and thwarted; but of him more perhaps than of any of his predecessors it may be said that he saw of the travail of his soul, and could, at least to some extent, be satisfied. His large judgment, looking back over the past and forward into the future, could see that liberty, justice, mercy, charity and truth had indeed increased in his time, and will doubtless continue to increase until the earth is as full of their riches as the waters cover the sea.

¹ Sermons on Special Occasions, pp. 11–12.

CHAPTER XV.

EDWIN HATCH.

1835-1890.

THE Church of England and the Christian religion suffered a very great loss in the premature death of Edwin Hatch. Premature in every sense, for though he lived longer than Robertson or Arnold, he can much less be said to have finished his work. His Hibbert Lectures, published after his death, indicate more than they actually accomplish of the contribution he seemed destined to make to the religious thought of his time. In the last of them he said, "Though the lectures are ended, the study of the subject has only begun;" and he spoke of himself as a "pioneer," inviting others to follow him.¹ Edwin Hatch did much, and, had he lived, would doubtless have done much more, towards that establishing of revealed or supernatural religion, by the higher organon of critical philosophy, on a sure and reasonable ground, which, in an early chapter of this book, the belief was expressed that the nineteenth century had begun, and that the twentieth century would accomplish. Philosophical development is always slow. We rarely have precocious metaphysicians. Most of those who have exercised the greatest influence upon philoso-

¹ Pp. 351-3.
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phical thought have been barely at their prime at the age at which Hatch died. The work for which he was eminently fitted, the work which he began, was principally philosophical. Though he fully recognised morality to be the chief aim of religion, and righteousness of life the one thing needful to membership in Christ, he repudiated few or none of the doctrines of orthodox Christianity; he can scarcely be said to have even rationalised any of them, but to have given indication, especially in his last lectures, of his ability and willingness to do so.

From a passage in one of his sermons it would appear that he shrank from iconoclasm, and preferred teaching uncertain truths to hasty destruction of familiar supports. For the sake of the poor and unhappy, the despairing and the miserable, he said: "Let us hesitate before—either by the emasculation of its doctrines or the discrediting of its credentials—we attempt to cripple Christianity as a moral power; let us hesitate before we condemn the oppressed and the lonely and the sad of generations yet to come to sit round the flickering embers of a dying faith, drinking cups of unmingled gall."¹ It is possible that in time he might have been better assured that the moral power of Christianity would suffer little or nothing from the emasculation of its doctrines or the discrediting of its credentials, and he might perhaps have led the way towards preserving the old beliefs in spite of some new certainties.

The following extract from his sermon on "The Place of Controversy in the Christian Life" is a good example of his views and teaching:—

¹ Memorials, pp. 52-3.

“‘Circumcision!’ shouted the Jew, zealous to bring the Gentile within the pale of the Mosaic legislation. ‘Uncircumcision!’ shouted the Gentile, seeing that the family of God was wider than the family of Jacob. . . . ‘*Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision!*’ cried St. Paul, ‘but a new creature.’ These words of St. Paul are the master-key to all the controversies which have raged or are raging still within the Christian Church or within the still wider sphere of the religious life of mankind. They mean this:—

“The one absolutely necessary thing to us Christian men, to us as children of God, in whom the Spirit of God is breathed, is not that we should be technically right in this or that practice, nor that we should be theoretically right in this or that doctrine, but that we should be new ‘creatures;’ that we should have risen above the lower, earthly, brutish part of us, the sensual, degrading, animal impulses, into a better and higher life, to a nobler and holier creed, to a diviner and more spiritual temper. The one paramount precept of the Christian religion—and of all religions—is, Be better than you have been; be purer, be braver, be sincerer, be truer, be kinder, be less of the animal and more of the man, have less of the old Adam and more of the new; be, in short, ‘new creatures.’ . . . St. Paul,” he went on to say, “was a great controversialist.

“It is of consequence that we should have well-founded beliefs; . . . it is of consequence that we should ascertain for ourselves what God has said and what He has not said; it is of consequence that we should not pick up our opinions haphazard. . . . But it is of vastly greater consequence that all through our search for truth or our controversy with supposed errors we should remember that belief is subordinate to practice, and that the highest knowledge which it is possible for us to hold fades into obscurity when compared with the love of God and the love of men, with the endeavour after a holy life and the active effort to do good in our generation. . . . That which availeth is the spirit of search rather than the fact of attainment, the spirit of charity rather than the having just one grain more truth on one side than on the other.

"Some day truth may dawn on us in its fulness, rising like the sun upon the unflecked sky of new-born and sinless souls; . . . but here, and now, while life is so awfully short and the realm of the unknown so awfully vast, it will not restrict our knowledge, it will certainly widen our charity, to know that controversy means so little, to know that goodness means so much, to know 'that neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision,' but the daily growth in calmness, in love, and self-control which St. Paul calls a 'new creature.'"¹

But if Edwin Hatch held the orthodox doctrines, he never taught them as dogmas or treated them as of primary importance to salvation. He dwelt chiefly on the moral aspects of the Christian doctrines. Preaching on the text, 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent," he said:—

"To know God is to know Him as manifested in the sphere of our humanity. . . . It is that knowledge of Christ which is a stimulating as well as a transforming power. It is the growth within us, by virtue of that transformation, of a new man, of a new self. It is the change from selfishness to unselfishness, from impatience to patience, from moral cowardice to moral courage, from distrustfulness to faith, from despondency to hope, from unreality to truth, from uncharitableness to love of the brethren, from selfish inactivity to helpfulness for good. . . .

"The effort after this is religion. There are many other things which might be said about religion, and there are some other sides from which it may be viewed, but this is the essence and kernel of it; it is the conscious effort to know God by realising in our lives the life of Christ."² . . .

"What the Gospel gives us, and all that a preacher can rightly offer to Christian men, is not detailed rules, but general principles.

¹ Memorials, pp. 92-6.

² Ibid., p. 189.

"Instead of the minute regulations of the Mosaic law, we have only, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;' 'He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.'

"Instead of elaborate counsels of perfection, we have only, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'

"And instead of 200 pages of the imitation of Christ, it repeats with emphasis the stern and solemn rule, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'

"*There* is the secret of the Christian life; there is the beginning of the knowledge of God; there is the earthly form of life eternal: 'Let him deny himself;' and that is all the exhortation I can give you."¹

Elsewhere he said, "In the Gospel we have at any rate a new *power*;" adding that in comparison with this the possibility of miracles, the historical fact of the resurrection, are unimportant, the fact remaining that the moral power of Christianity "has changed and is changing the moral tone of the human race."² And though he spoke of the resurrection of Christ being a fact as well as an allegory, he concluded with this caution: "Not in the grey dawn alone, but through all the many days and years of the Christian history, has the same story been repeated. Crowd after crowd of theologians and saints and common men has followed the Marys to the sepulchre. The history of the Church has been in no small degree the history of a search for a dead rather than a living Christ."³

It may be that further consideration would have convinced him that miracles did not and do not happen, and that the resurrection never was a physical fact, but has

¹ Memorials, p. 192.

² Ibid., pp. 15-16.

³ Ibid., p. 24.

always been a spiritual allegory. No matter! "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," is the one supremely important lesson; questions of miracles and of historical facts are of secondary interest only.

Hatch would allow of no shrinking from inquiry. He severely denounced the foolish arrogance of saying, "I do not know Greek, but I do know English, and if you will give me a fair translation I will tell you what St. Paul means;" or "I do not know the language which was current in Syria in the first century of our era, but I do know the language which was current in Athens four centuries before, and I can guess at one from the other;" of presuming to "sniff the scents of true interpretation, and to detect from afar the odours of erroneous interpretation;" or of professing "to submit to the Church 'as it ought to be,'" pretending to discriminate by an intuition "the real voices of the Church" from those of "hirelings;" and regretted that, "concurrently with the growth in theology and controversy there had not been a commensurate growth in theological study, and a commensurate increase of the sense of humility."¹

Or again he said:—

"Acquiescence in whatever we at present see, knowing that what we see is partial and incomplete, is not humility, but a low form of pride—the pride of conscious ignorance."²

He more than once in his sermons advocated the study of "the history of Christian institutions, Christian usages, and Christian beliefs." "Church history," he claimed, "tends to establish the presumption which is raised by antecedent considerations, that in the Church as in the

¹ See Memorials, Sermon XIII., On Humility.

² Ibid., p. 219.

world, in society in its new relation to God, in society as in its old relation to God, variety is the law of life, and that ideas and institutions not only differ, but are meant to be different.”¹

True humility, he said,

“points us . . . to the inevitable imperfection of each individual soul, and tells us that no one man’s mind is a perfect mirror of the mind of God. It is not dogmatism, for dogmatism maintains, not only, as humility maintains, the truth of its own assertions, but the falsehood of all others. . . . It is not compromise; for while it acknowledges that there may be truths which it does not itself see, it gives up no iota of its own convictions, . . . but the very strength of its conviction makes it admit the coexistence and the possible co-ordination, as truth, of similar convictions in the mind of other men. It consequently declines to claim for itself infallibility. It asserts no monopoly of truth. Believing as it does that we are all sons of one Father, it cannot believe that to one son exclusively has the Father revealed His nature; and believing this, it is urged on by that irresistible impulse which to most men becomes an inexorable duty, to endeavour to supplement its own imperfection. It becomes the law, not of standing still, but of progress.”²

This, he went on to say, is the *via media* in which it is especially the duty of all loyal sons of the English Church to walk.

He blamed the usual attitude of religion towards the new world of modern discovery and thought for its “timidity,” and its reluctance to “accept the new truths which have established themselves.” “It has,” he said, “questioned palpable facts; it has denied certain inferences. Almost any scientific paradox which linked

¹ Memorials, p. 170.

² Ibid., pp. 222-5.

itself to a text of Scripture has been applauded as though it were a truth; almost all scientific truths, the bearing of which upon religion was not immediately seen, have been denounced as heresies." He did not imagine that the time had come, nor even that it was near at hand, to show that all results of modern knowledge are in harmony with all that Christians hold as matters of faith. . . . But believing," he said emphatically, "as I do that both are true and both Divine, I believe with a profound conviction that there is a harmony which has yet to come." He based his hope of this harmony on the analogy of the early antagonism and subsequent reconciliation, amounting to identification, between Christianity and philosophy from the first to the fourth centuries; and, moreover, predicted that, "as Christianity after its union with Greek philosophy was richer in the variety of its elements, and had a stronger hold upon humanity, so will it be the richer and the stronger for assimilating modern knowledge. It will be the more so because the metaphysical ideas which it incorporated fifteen centuries ago have had almost too exclusive a sway within it; and it will reach vast areas of human life which it has yet hardly begun to conquer, when it has added to the elements which it has gathered to itself in the past, the new elements of this present time."¹

Hatch believed in the continual growth and development of Christianity by the perpetual life of Christ in His Church.

"He who helped men in their common life long ago helps us still. The mere memory of Him would have done much

¹ Memorials, pp. 284-7.

for us. . . . The fact that the ideal of humanity had once been realised would of itself have been an encouragement and a support to us in our efforts to do better. But the strength we have is something far higher. It is the strength of One who is ever present by His Spirit—who being very God is not far from every one of us, who being very man can penetrate the deep recesses of our hearts and know at once their aspirations and their needs.”¹

“Christianity,” he said, “grows because it comes from God. It changes because it grows. It is continually re-adapting itself to its environment, and it has thereby within it the elements of perpetuity. It underlies all progress, being itself the spirit of progress. It embraces all truth, being itself the spirit of truth. It lives with the world’s life. It expands with the world’s expansion. The widening thoughts of men reach no sphere into which it does not follow them. Its capacity is infinite as the universe. It is as undying as the souls which it redeems.”²

Fully admitting that “that which won the world for Christ was a simple creed; that which linked men together was the simple love of the brethren; that which has been permanent in doctrine has been not subtle theories but elementary truths; that which has been permanent in organisation has been not the form but the fact of it”—he yet held that “doctrine and organisation” have both been essential to Christianity. Being, however, careful to add:—“It [Christianity] has held its sway not by the elaborateness of its doctrines, but by their simplicity; not by the fixedness of its organisation, but by its elasticity;” ending with this warning: “Just as there has been a singular and most mischievous confusion of ideas between the necessity of believing in Christ and the necessity of believing this or that theory

¹ Memorials, pp. 18-19.

² Ibid., p. 288.

about Him, so has there been a singular and most mischievous confusion of ideas between the necessity of having some organisation and the necessity of having this or that particular organisation.”¹

From these passages it will be seen that though he attached no importance to doctrines and ceremonies as means of salvation, he regarded them as necessary to the full development of the mind and spirit of man, and accepted them as indications of the will of the Father of Spirits. Accordingly, in his Bampton Lectures on “The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches,” and in his Hibbert Lectures on “The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church” he traced the natural and needful growth of Church institutions and doctrines.

He premised his Bampton Lectures with the statement that “as matter of historical research, the facts of ecclesiastical history do not differ in kind from the facts of civil history.”² He showed how in the apostolic times no difference existed between clergy and laity, laymen being not only permitted to preach, but to baptize and administer the Communion.³ He showed further how the necessity for a Church order arose “by the gradual evolution of that great scheme of God’s government of the world which, though present eternally to His sight, is but slowly unfolded before ours.”⁴ Then he showed how Church Councils and definite communions came about, but he was careful to enforce that the true communion of Christian men is not dependent on churches and ceremonies, but by participation in the spirit of Christ:—

¹ Memorials, pp. 293-4.

³ Ibid., Lecture v.

² Bampton Lectures, pp. 1-3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

“The true communion of Christian men—the ‘communion of saints’ upon which all Churches are built—is not the common performance of external acts, but a communion of soul with soul and of the soul with Christ. It is a consequence of the nature which God has given us that an external organisation should help our communion one with another; it is a consequence both of our twofold nature and of Christ’s appointment that external acts should help our communion with Him. But subtler, deeper, diviner than anything of which external things can be either the symbol or the bond is that inner reality and essence of union, that interpenetrating communion of thought and character, which St. Paul speaks of as the ‘unity of the Spirit,’ and which in the sublimest of sublime books, in the most sacred of sacred words, is likened to the oneness of the Son with the Father and of the Father with the Son.”¹

In his Hibbert Lectures he examined the origin of the great and radical change in the history of Christendom of the substitution of the Nicene Creed for the Sermon on the Mount.

“It is impossible,” he said in the introductory lecture, “for any one, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and contents between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than to the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical tenets which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers.

¹ Bampton Lectures, pp. 187-8.

"The contrast is patent. If any one thinks that it is sufficiently explained by saying that the one is a sermon and the other a creed, it must be pointed out in reply that the question why an ethical sermon stood in the forefront of the teaching of Jesus Christ, and a metaphysical creed in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century, is a problem which claims investigation."¹

The main question of his inquiries is, "not how did the first Christian societies come to believe one proposition rather than another, but how did they come to the frame of mind which attached importance to either the one or the other, and made the assent to the one rather than the other a condition of membership?" After showing how it was "by the transference of Christianity from a Semitic to a Greek soil" that "the change in the centre of gravity from conduct to belief" was brought about, and that "the conception of a dogmatic theology and its underlying assumptions come from the Greek tendency to attach the same certainty to metaphysical as to physical ideas," he observed that such assumptions "are in reality built upon a quicksand":—

"There is no more reason to suppose that God has revealed metaphysics than that He has revealed chemistry. The Christian revelation is, at least primarily, a setting forth of certain facts. It does not in itself afford a guarantee of the certainty of the speculations which are built upon those facts. All such speculations are *dogmas* in the original use of the word. They are simply personal convictions. . . .

"The belief that metaphysical theology is more than this is the chief bequest of Greece to religious thought, and it has been a *damnosa hereditas*. It has given to later Christianity that part of it which is doomed to perish, and which yet, while it lives, holds the key of the prison-house of many souls."²

¹ Hibbert Lectures, pp. 1-2.

² Ibid., pp. 137-8.

Hatch was far from regretting the influence of Greek thought on Christianity. He only desired to have fully recognised the phases of development and consequent transitoriness of much that is at present taught authoritatively.

Speaking of the influence of Greek mysteries on Christian rites, he said :—

“In the splendid ceremonial of Eastern and Western worship, in the blaze of lights, in the separation of the central point of the rite from common view, in the processions of torch-bearers chanting their sacred hymns, there is the survival, and in some cases the galvanised survival, of what I cannot find it in my heart to call a *pagan* ceremonial; because, though it was the expression of a less enlightened faith, yet it was offered to God from a heart that was not less earnest in its search for God and in its effort after holiness than our own.”¹

He showed in these lectures how the need for Church Councils, for the formation of a canon of Scripture, and for a precise definition of creed arose. He showed too how much assumption is involved in the popular notions concerning these things. Without denying an element of truth in them, he yet insisted upon the recognition that the demand “that a man should be able to say with minute exactness what he means by God” is “purely philosophical” and derived from Greek sources; that another assumption is “belief in a majority of a meeting;” and that God never speaks to men except through the voice of the majority . . . is a transference of the transcendental sphere in which the highest conceptions of the Divine nature move to what is a convenient practical rule for conducting the business of human society, ‘Let the major-

¹ Hibbert Lectures, p. 309.

rity decide.' " That yet another assumption is involved in the doctrine that "the definitions and interpretations of primary belief which were made by the majority, or even by the unanimous voice of a Church assembly in a particular age, and which were both relative to the dominant mental tendencies of that age and adequately expressed them, are not only true but final." ¹

He showed, too, how at first the bond of union among Christians was moral, and afterwards became doctrinal; how the growth, "both within the Church and on its outskirts, of opinions which were not the opinions of the majority, the tendency of all majorities to assert their power, the flocking into the Christian fold of the educated Greeks and Romans, who brought with them the intellectual habits of mind which dominated in the age, gave to the intellectual element an importance which it had not previously possessed. Knowledge, which had always been in some sort an element of Christianity, though not as a basis of association, came to assert itself side by side with love." ²

He thus concluded at once his lectures and the teaching of his life:—

"Christianity has won no great victories since its basis was changed. The victories that it has won it has won by preaching, not Greek metaphysics, but the love of God and the love of man. Its darkest pages are those which record the story of its endeavouring to force its transformed Greek metaphysics upon men or upon races to whom they were alien. The only ground of despair in those who accept Christianity now is the fear, which I for one cannot entertain, that the dominance of the metaphysical element in it will be perpetual.

"It is possible to urge, on the one hand, that Christianity,

¹ Hibbert Lectures, pp. 329-33.

² Lecture xii.

which began without them, which grew on a soil whereon metaphysics never thrived, which won its first victories over the world by the simple moral force of the Sermon on the Mount and by the sublime influence of the life and death of Christ, may throw off Hellenism and be none the loser, but rather stand out again before the world in the uncoloured majesty of the Gospels. It is possible to urge that what was absent from the early form cannot be essential, and that the Sermon on the Mount is not an outlying part of the Gospel, but its sum. It is possible to urge, on the other hand, that the tree of life, which was planted by the hand of God Himself in the soil of human society, was intended from the first to grow by assimilating to itself whatever elements it found there. It is possible to maintain that Christianity was intended to be a development, and that its successive growths are for the time at which they exist integral and essential. . . . But whether we accept the one or the other, it seems clear that much of the Greek element may be abandoned. On the former hypothesis it is not essential; on the latter it is an incomplete development, and has no claim to permanence.”¹

Hatch expressed his hope that in the future the Christian religion would, without abandoning anything that was of real value in the past, restore morality and spirituality to their rightful pre-eminence over doctrine and ceremony.

“Though,” he said in conclusion, “you may believe that I am but a dreamer of dreams, I seem to see, though it be on the far horizon—the horizon beyond the fields which either we or our children will tread—a Christianity which is not new but old, which is not old but new, a Christianity in which the moral and spiritual elements will again hold their place, in which men will be bound together by the bond of mutual service, which is the bond of the sons of God, a Christianity which will actually recognise the brotherhood of man, the ideal of its first communities.”²

¹ Hibbert Lectures, p. 349.

² Ibid., pp. 351-3.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

WE have now examined the teaching of those deceased English clergymen of the nineteenth century who are commonly called Broad Churchmen. Even when they are taken together with the liberal divines of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the Broad Churchmen of to-day, their number cannot claim to be as large as that of either the High or the Low Church parties. But though the numerical strength of the liberal school may be small, its moral and intellectual worth is great. There have been far more men of European and lasting fame among the Broad than among the High and Low Church parties. It would be impossible to produce as unbroken a succession of eminent divines from Laud to Liddon, from Latimer to Burgh, as from Jewel to Edwin Hatch.

Furthermore, as I endeavoured to prove in the introductory chapter of this book, the presence of these non-dogmatic divines in the English Church is due to no accident, but is in accordance with the nature of its constitution; they are no party, but are indeed the truest sons of the Church.

It must now be shown how far the Church of England has remained true during this century to its non-dogmatic origin—(i.) by the decisions of the Courts of Justice and

the enactments of the Legislature; (ii.) by the decay of dogmatism among the clergy; and (iii.) what yet there remains to be done to bring about a recognition of the principles of Christ.

I. Its comprehension of all schools of thought, provided the moral law be respected, has been shown, *1st*, by two very important decisions of the Privy Council; *2nd*, by various Acts of Parliament and Church measures:—

1st. By the final judgment in the celebrated *Gorham v. Philpotts* case in 1850, the Calvinistic doctrine of baptismal regeneration was declared to be not contrary to the teaching of the Church of England. Lord Langdale said that the question of baptismal regeneration had been left open by our Church; and that this was done intentionally, the subject of baptism being surrounded “by a great variety of opinions” at the time when the Articles and Formularies of the Church were drawn up; that “on these points all ministers of the Church having duly made the subscriptions required by law (and taking Holy Scripture for their guide), are at liberty honestly to exercise their private judgment without offence or censure.”¹

2nd. By the judgment in the case of *Shepherd v. Bennett* in 1870, the ritualistic section was confirmed in its right to form a part of the English Church. It was on this occasion pointed out that greater conformity in ceremony and acts of ritual is demanded by the law of the Church of England than in doctrine. In previous ritual cases sentence had been given against the defendants for certain practices, such as the use of lights on the altar at Morning

¹ See Broderick and Fremantle's *Ecclesiastical Judgments of the Privy Council*, pp. 64-115.

Prayer, of incense, &c. ; in the Bennett case, however, no overt acts were charged, but certain abstruse tenets concerning the presence of Christ at the celebration of the Holy Communion. The non-sacerdotal character of the English Church was carefully insisted on. But though the judgment was often harshly expressed, the benefit of the doubt was given in interpreting the vague and mystical language used by the defendant. The right "to assert his opinions," as Mr. W. G. Brooke remarks, "with the same freedom as the truth of them is denied by members of the same Church," being fully recognised.¹

3rd. Some minor Acts of the Church and the Legislature have further contributed to the recognition of the undogmatic and comprehensive character of the English Church. For instance, the new lectionary admits some of the results of biblical criticism, such as the two accounts of the creation. The "New Bible Commentary," published on the authority of the two archbishops, several of the bishops, divinity professors, &c., fully admits, as Colenso observed, "that we have no correct record of the Ten Commandments," that the two accounts "differ from each other in several weighty particulars," and that "it is by no means unlikely that there are insertions of a later date which were written or sanctioned by the prophets and holy men who, after the Captivity, arranged and edited the Scriptures of the Old Testament."² The assistance of scholars, who were not members of the Church of England, on the Bible Revision Committee, though fiercely contested by many members

¹ See Six Privy Council Judgments, pp. 223-248, and Appendix, pp. 271-3.

² Preface to Part vii. of "The Pentateuch," pp. xiv., &c.

of Convocation, was in the end secured. The Shortened Services Bill, or Acts of Uniformity Amendment Act of 1872, granting greater freedom in the use of the Church services, recognising as distinct services the order for Morning Prayer, the Litany, the order for the administration of the Lord's Supper, and the separation of the sermon from the service and the service from the sermon—that is, that a sermon may be delivered apart from the service, and preceded only by the Bidding Prayer or a Collect, or that a service may be held without being followed by a sermon, lecture, or homily,¹ has done somewhat to show that religion does not consist in lengthy services or in vain repetitions.

4th. The non-dogmatic character of the English Church has been fully established by the most important parliamentary measure on Church matters since the Reformation, namely, the Clerical Subscription Amendment Act of 1865. This bill was the result of a Royal Commission in 1863, which was composed of distinguished laymen, as well as archbishops, bishops, and other dignitaries of the Church. It was introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury. All agreed to speak of it as “a measure of *peace*.” Without much discussion it was passed and sent down to the House of Commons. Mr. Buxton's speech at the second reading was the most important. He said: “Having been himself a member of the Commission which proposed this change, he was in a position to affirm that it was the express intention of the Commission to relax the extravagant stringency of the existing Acts; in other words, to make it

¹ See Public Statutes for 1872.

possible for men to minister at the altars of the Church although they may dissent from some part of her teaching, provided, however, they accepted it as a whole. . . . What the Commission had aimed at was, on the one hand, to preserve such a general concurrence, . . . but on the other, to afford the clergy scope for some independence of thought within these wide bounds. . . . The Commission had agreed to sweep away the words 'each and every of them [the Articles],' implying therefore that the subscriber was only to take them as a whole, even though he might disagree with them here and there. . . . It was expressly and unanimously agreed by the Commission that the word 'doctrine' should be used in the singular number, in order that it might be understood that it was the general teaching, and not every part and parcel of that teaching, to which assent was given."¹ The bill passed the third reading June 29, and received the royal assent July 1.

This measure may be said to have ratified to us that second reformation which Bishop Watson, on the threshold of the nineteenth century, predicted, and which generations of pious and learned men have laboured to achieve. Two previous attempts—in 1772 and in 1842—had been made to thus complete the work of the sixteenth century. But we must suppose that the times were not then ripe for this full recognition of the undogmatic nature of the English Church.

Assent to the "general doctrine" of the National Church is all that is now required of the English clergy. What then is this "general doctrine?" What is the general belief

¹ See Hansard's Parliamentary Reports, June 1865.

expressed by the prayers and psalms, the readings from Scripture, and the rites and ceremonies of the Church? Is it dry dogma, or is it a belief in an ideal of goodness, of love, of justice, of mercy, and of truth; in a capacity within us to rise to that ideal, and in a power not of ourselves, but in ourselves, by which we may hope to attain thereto? And is not this a confession of faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? Does not such a faith as this, taken in its largest, least defined and particularised sense, include all parties, all sects and churches and all schools of thought? Do not Theists, Unitarians, Trinitarians, Agnostics, and Positivists alike hold this catholic faith, in that they reverence goodness, hope to increase in goodness, and welcome all helps to goodness? What is this but to believe in thought, if not in form, in the three aspects of the one God of orthodoxy?

It is impossible to overrate the importance of this measure to the English Church. General agreement with the doctrine of the Articles being all that is required of the clergy, it is difficult to see how any one wishing to be a minister of God, acknowledging Christ as his Master, and believing in the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, need scruple to seek holy orders. Neither would it now be possible to obtain a legal verdict of heresy. The manner of administering the law of the Church of England has never been to compare the general tendency of the writings of the accused with the general tendency of the Articles and Formularies, but to compare given passages from the one with specified portions of the other.¹ As therefore

¹ By the Gorham judgment it was determined that the clergy can only be tried for infringement of the Articles and Formularies, not of parts of

no one particular Article can be held binding on the clergy, no one particular Article can ever be said to be violated. So that unless a man distinctly denies the truth of the whole tenour of the doctrine of the English Church he cannot be cited for heresy. This no one is likely to do, for it would be an avowal of disbelief in goodness and in the possibility of becoming better, in truth and the possibility of acquiring truth, in love and the possibility of growing in love. No sane man would deny these things and yet wish to remain a professed servant of the God of love, of truth and of goodness.

5th. Another event of great moment that has occurred in this last quarter of the nineteenth century was the admission that the theological opinions of the laity in no way affect their right of communion in the English Church. This was determined by the Jenkins Cook case, heard on appeal before the Privy Council in 1876.¹

II. Turning now to the internal history of religious thought in the Church of England of the nineteenth century, there are two or three doctrines on which it may be safely said to have become less dogmatic:—

1st. *The infallibility of Scripture.* Dean Burgon was perhaps the last English divine of any scholarship or ability who ventured to assert the absolute infallibility of the Bible in all respects and on all subjects. When "Essays and Reviews" was published great indignation was expressed by the clergy and laity; again, when two of the Prayer Book or Bible. In the "Essays and Reviews" judgment it was said that "the Court can pay no attention to the general impression produced by the publication of 'Essays and Reviews.'"

¹ See *ante*, p. 17.

the contributors, Williams and Wilson, were acquitted of the charge of teaching doctrines contrary to the Church, some clergymen and laymen signed a declaration that they believed in the eternal damnation of those even who had never heard of the Saviour, and in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures, asserting that they considered this to be the teaching of the English Church. But their protests were alike impotent and undignified; moreover they represented only the opinions of individuals, not of the Church. The Bishops of London and St. David's (Tait and Thirlwall), however, protested against what they called a "melancholy declaration." Moreover, the volumes published in reply to the Essays, under the editorships of the Bishop of Oxford and the Archbishop of York, admitted that the Bible is not inspired in such a sense as to preclude human imperfection. Finally, when the recent attempt to carry a vote of censure in Convocation on "Lux Mundi" failed, a member of Convocation reminded his zealous brother of the terms in which he had sought the condemnation of "Essays and Reviews," and added that perhaps not one of the clergy, except the mover of the motion, would now be found to condemn it or even to protest against it.

A glance through the preceding pages will show with what an increasing clearness the difference between inspiration and infallibility has been recognised. A comparison between the treatment of the Scriptures by Arnold and Maurice with some volumes and articles by living Churchmen will show a very remarkable change. Fifty years ago Bible history was believed to have been specially planned by God as an object lesson to the

human race; now the events recorded are believed to have happened without the direct intervention of the Almighty, but to be illustrative of the evolution of the spiritual nature of man, of his ascent from very low depths of cruelty and ignorance towards purity and knowledge. Fifty years ago, to have parts of the Bible treated as common history was distressing to pious-minded men, while to-day to have parts of the Bible treated as other than myth and poetry is equally distressing to equally pious-minded men. Whether we regard this change of tone with hope or with fear depends a good deal on whether we love the spirit better than the letter, and can dare, in the strength of God, to face all truth.

2nd. *The question of Christian Evidences.* Here too a great change has taken place. We now set little or no store by the testimony of miracles. Some effort is still made to retain a semblance of faith in these events. Miracles are generally now defined as adaptations and not violations of the laws of nature, and consequently cease to be miraculous in the real sense of the word. To reduce the legends in the Old and New Testaments as far as possible to the level of ordinary occurrences is the endeavour of those conscientious but poor-spirited divines who cannot fully accept the conclusions of criticism and philosophy and yet dare not altogether deny their teaching. Miracles fifty years ago were accepted as simple marvels, on the word of Scripture. Then, as the voice of Science made itself better heard, it was found that the moral truths of Christian doctrine were more readily believed than was the miraculous element. Finally, when men began to perceive the fallibility of the Bible, the invariability of

law, and the self-sufficiency of the Christian religion, they discovered, at the same time, that miracles may be only the result of ignorant and enthusiastic hero-worship, which turned metaphor into fact, parable into history, and magnified kindly deeds into vulgar conjuring tricks. The change of tone in this matter has been very slow, and is even yet barely admitted. The clergy, however, though they may for the most part still think they believe theoretically in miracles, seldom make any explicit mention of them except in order to illustrate a point of conduct or of doctrine. It will be remembered that Thirlwall owned that the Christian religion is dependent on no single miracle, except that of the resurrection, that Milman acknowledged that more conversions to Christianity were wrought by its doctrines than by the mighty works of its Founder, and that Stanley confessed his pleasure that the progress of science should have shown that "the limits of the natural and supernatural are less definite than was once imagined." There are clergymen of the Church of England to-day who have ventured to explain the growth of these illusions, and to deny the occurrence of any supernatural event at any time or in any place from the speaking of Balaam's ass to the bodily resurrection of Christ. They have shown us that an unbroken adherence to law and order is more in keeping with our highest conception of God than any conjuring tricks and jugglery.

The Christian faith now stands on much firmer ground : —not on the authority of a book or of a Church, but on reason and experience ; not on the witness of this man or that, but on the testimony of our conscience ; not on miracles or fulfilment of prophecy, or Church councils,

or supposed judgments of God, but on the witness in ourselves and in the world around us of a God who is "not far from any one of us," "in Whom we live and move and have our being." Even if the traditional account of the birth, death and rising again of the Founder of Christianity fade before the light of reason and knowledge, the essence of the religion of Christ is too deeply rooted in the moral nature of man, has won its way too steadily in all countries, under all circumstances, among all varieties of men, to be ever overthrown. The Being of God, the divinity of man, the universality of the Spirit are increasingly recognised as facts of philosophy, and will continue to be believed even when it has been acknowledged that the story of the Deity walking in a garden is but an Eastern poem, that the theory of a unique incarnation is but a crude expression of a great truth, and that the notions of the Spirit of the universe appearing in the form of a dove or speaking with the voice of a man, are but Oriental metaphors materialised by our dull Western minds.

3rd. *The doctrine of the Trinity.* From Maurice to Hatch may be perceived the steadily increasing influence of a philosophy at once subtler and sounder than any of its predecessors, not excepting those of Plato and Aristotle,—I mean the metaphysic of modern Germany recast and interpreted by Professor T. H. Green, Principal Caird, and others. The difference between the philosophical creed commonly called the Athanasian and that of our modern Broad Churchmen is one of degree, not of kind. But the difference is as great as that between the Copernican and the Aristotelian theory of the heavens, between the astronomy of the author of Genesis and that

of the author of the "Principia." The Trinity is seldom now taught as a sort of charm against perdition; but is presented to us, by those who are capable of looking at the subject philosophically, as a rational and sublime theory of the universe—God in nature, God in history, God in the individual.¹

III. Some minor alterations in our Church are still, no doubt, desirable. It would, for one thing, be well if the creeds were altogether withdrawn from our services. The prayers and hymns, the psalms and lessons, the preaching of the clergy should be a sufficient profession and exposition of our faith. True, the creeds do not occur as a setting forth of dogma, and are not accompanied by any corresponding denunciation of error. But their place in our services is liable to be misunderstood; they have too much the appearance of being there for offensive and defensive purposes. Even more desirable is it that the Scriptural form of baptism be recognised as alone essential in the public service, the promises of the sponsors and the assent to the creed being made perfectly optional. For those who might still object to this retention of the *duo necessaria*—i.e., the invocation and the sprinkling with water—the repeal of that infamous canon against Christian burial for those who die unbaptized would be but consistent with the charity and liberality of our Church, such a cruel and useless visiting of the sin, if sin it be, of the parents on the children being utterly at variance with the Christian religion. Another desirable point is the free admission to our pulpits and communion of

¹ See chapter on "The Triune God" in "Defects of Modern Christianity," by Professor A. W. Momerie.

members of all existing denominations. Arnold's suggestion that services other than those of the Church of England might sometimes be held in the national churches is indeed worthy of consideration. These measures would perhaps result, in the course of time, in an amalgamation of all sects with the Established Church. It would also be well if it were understood that sermons are intended chiefly for moral exhortation, and that instruction in metaphysics or theology, like lessons in geology or biology, bear only indirectly on religion. Lastly, there should be much greater freedom in the selection and rejection of portions of Scripture for reading in our churches than is afforded by the present lectionary.

We constantly hear lamentations that the English Church has not enough ministers for her work, and that to keep up even this insufficient number the educational standard has had to be lowered. Honour men, first-class men, seldom now take orders. Why is this? Is it not that the English Church is generally understood to be dogmatic in character, and is represented by her overseers and bishops as sworn to the defence of obsolete theories and garbled facts? The few really brilliant men in the Church receive but scant encouragement. The high places are too frequently filled by mediocre men. Our bishops and archbishops, our deans and archdeacons, are too often timid and prejudiced, though worthy, industrious and courteous, as for instance, Tait, Fraser and Lightfoot; sometimes even shallow, disingenuous and harsh, like Philpotts, Prince Lee and Wilberforce. The real pioneers and leaders—the Arnolds, Robertsons, Wilsons,

Williams and MacNaughts—being meanwhile passed over and ignored, and are deemed lucky if they escape prosecution, or if prosecuted are acquitted, and that by lay judges. How can we expect the best men of their year, well read in science and modern thought, to accept a brief, as they suppose, for Genesis against geology, for Ecclesiastes against morality, for Nehemiah against charity? Or to maintain the crude philosophy of the early fathers and schoolmen against the sounder philosophy and wider knowledge of to-day? Unless the non-dogmatic character of the English Church is cordially acknowledged, nay insisted on, by our bishops, the level of education among the clergy must altogether sink below that of the people.

Whether a State Church is desirable at all is not my present consideration. We should probably still be taught true religion by undenominational ministers, by books and lectures, even if we had no state-supported bishops and clergy to do so. This, however, is certain: if we are to have an Established Church of England much longer, it must be national in fact as in name. And further, I maintain that the present Establishment, with a few trifling alterations, is thoroughly fit to be and to remain the national Church. If the Established Church breaks up now, it will be with much of her best elements unappreciated and misunderstood. It will be, as Stanley said of the possible decease of the Christian religion in general, "like an ungenial spring cut short in full view of summer, a stately vessel wrecked within the very sight of shore." It has been said that the Church of England is rapidly

approaching dissolution. It may be so ; but if it be, her death will result from neglect and ignorance, not from old age ; from the mismanagement of her doctors, not from any mortal disease. It has been my aim in this book to show that the Church of England is intrinsically non-dogmatic. If this fact be recognised, she will live. If it be not, she must die. I have been pleading for her life.

THE END.

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